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The Student's Old Testament

THE SONGS, HYMNS, AND PRAYERS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE STUDENT'S OLD TESTAMENT

LOGICALLY AND CHRONOLOGICALLY
ARRANGED AND TRANSLATED

BY

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Bible. O.T. Selections. English.

The Student's Old Testament

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PREFACE

During the critical period of Bible study that is just passing, the Hebrew lyrics, and especially the great psalms of the Old Testament Psalter, have been to a certain extent neglected. The present generation, however, is beginning to experience the joy of rediscovering them. Like the Gospels in the New Testament, they are the real heart of the Old Testament. In them the innermost soul of the Jewish race is laid bare. In such psalms as the eighth, the twenty-third, the fifty-first, the ninetieth, the ninety-first, the one hundred and third, and the one hundred and thirty-ninth Israel's faith finds its noblest expression. These immortal hymns of praise and adoration are also the link that binds the Old to the New Testament. In their atmosphere Jesus was born, bred, and lived, Faith, hope, joy, love, loyalty, and service are the six virtues pre-eminently emphasized. A dauntless faith in God and in man; an invincible hope that the future holds in store only what is essentially good; a serene joy even in the presence of disaster and distress; a passionate love of nature, of nature's God, and of all his creatures; a devoted loyalty to the law, to the institutions and ideals of the race, and to the divine Father who inspired them; and, to crown all, a burning zeal to help the needy, the ignorant and erring, and to carry the knowledge of God and the blessings of true religion to the ends of the earth—these are the supreme contributions of the psalms to the present age. Here Israel's greatest prophets, priests, and sages speak out of the depths and richness of their own personal experience directly to the heart of modern man.

The past century of biblical discovery and research has added much to our appreciation and interpretation of the Old Testament lyrics. The recovery of the ancient Egyptian, Sumerian, and Babylonian hymns has broadened our horizon by at least two millenniums. The discovery of Hebrew, Greek, and other texts, far older than those followed by the translators of the classic Authorized Version of the Bible, has made it possible to substitute in most cases original readings for uncertain conjectures. The rediscovery of the genius of Hebrew rhythm has placed in the hands of the modern translator a most valuable aid in recovering the original text. That the canons of textual revision must be faithfully applied to the Hebrew lyrics is strikingly illustrated by Psalm 18, which is quoted *in toto* in II Samuel 22. Out of the thirty or more variations between these two versions of the

same hymn there are at least twenty examples of scribal errors in the Hebrew text of Psalm 18, which fortunately may be corrected by means of II Samuel 22 as well as by the aid of the Greek and other versions. Like most of the books of the Old Testament, the psalms have not escaped the zeal of the later scribal revisers. As a rule these later explanatory or expansional revisions can be readily recognized; but to cut and hew the Hebrew lyrics to fit a theoretical strophic structure (as certain recent translators and commentators have done) is not only unscientific but in most cases reveals a failure to appreciate the logical and literary unity of the individual psalms. Equally fatal is the tendency to measure Oriental poetry by arbitrary Occidental standards. Another Oriental characteristic of the Psalter—the fact that its prayers and hymns are not logically arranged—has presented to many readers and students a most serious difficulty. In this volume the Hebrew lyrics are first classified according to their content and dominant motive and then, within each group, arranged as far as is possible in the order in which they were written. The translation also aims to reproduce the measured beat and the strophic rhythm of the original Hebrew, so that general students of literature, as well as special students of the Bible, may enjoy the matchless beauty both of the form and the thought of these Hebrew classics.

C. F. K.

YALE UNIVERSITY,
August, 1914.

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General Abbreviations

AmRV = American Revised Version (1901).
AV = Authorised Version (1611).
Apocr. = Apocrypha or apocryphal.
Aram. = Aramaic.
Assyr. = Assyrian.
Baby. = Babylonian.
cf. = compare.
e. g. = for example.
f. = and following.
Gk. = Greek B (Vatican) text of the O.T.
Gk.A = Alexandrian Gk. text of the O.T.
Gk. ℵ = Sinaitic Gk. text of the O.T.
Heb. = Hebrew.
i. e. = that is.
Jos. = Josephus.
Lat. = Latin (Vulgate) text of Jerome.
Lit. = literally.
Luc. = Lucian's Recension of the Greek O.T.
N.T. = New Testament.
Old L. = Old Latin Version of the O.T.
Origen = Reading found in Origen's *Hexapla*.
O.T. = Old Testament.
Pent. = Pentateuch.
RV = Revised Version (1885).
Sam. = Samaritan Version of the Pent.
Sem. = Semitic.
Syr. = Syriac Version of the O.T.
Targ. = Targum.
Vs. = verse.

Abbreviations for the Old Testament and Apocryphal Books

Gen. = Genesis.
Ex. = Exodus.
Lev. = Leviticus.
Num. = Numbers.
Dt. = Deuteronomy.
Josh. = Joshua.
Judg. = Judges.
Sam. = Samuel.
Kgs. = Kings.
Chr. = Chronicles.
Neh. = Nehemiah.
Esth. = Esther.
Ps. = Psalms.
Pr. = Proverbs.
Ecc = Ecclesiastes.
Sg. of Sgs. = Song of Songs.
Is. = Isaiah.
Jer. = Jeremiah.
Lam. = Lamentations.
Ezek. = Ezekiel.
Dan. = Daniel.
Hos. = Hosea.
Am. = Amos.
Ob. = Obadiah.
Jonah = Jonah.
Mi. = Micah.
Nah. = Nahum.
Hab. = Habakkuk.
Zeph. = Zephaniah.
Hag. = Haggai.
Zech. = Zechariah.
Mal. = Malachi.
Esdr. = Esdras.
Wisd. Sol. = Wisdom of Solomon.
B. Sir. = Ben Sira or Ecclesiasticus.
Bar. = Baruch.
Sg. of Three = Song of the Three Children.
Sus. = Susanna.
Pryr. of Man. = Prayer of Manasses.
Mac. = Maccabees.
Enoch = Book of Enoch.
Ps. of Sol. = Psalms of Solomon.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I

THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HEBREW POETRY

The essential nature of poetry

POETRY may be defined as the imaginative and rhythmic expression of the insight, the feeling, and the creative thought of an inspired soul. In brief, it is thought and emotion set to the music of words. Its object is to awaken and direct the imagination and emotions of the hearer or reader so that he will also share the poet's own insight, feeling, and thought. As the fundamental meaning of the word implies, the poet is a maker, a creator, as well as an interpreter. There are four essential elements in all poetry: (1) inspiration, (2) imagination, (3) creative power, and (4) rhythm. Back of all poetry is some inspiring force that stirs the mind of the poet. It may be the beauty of nature, a striking national or personal experience, an illuminating idea, or a deep emotion. Underlying all these, faith recognizes the spirit of the Eternal who, in different ways, touches and imparts his truth to the responsive mind of the poet. The real poet must also possess the power of imagination, the ability to see clearly and concretely with his mental vision that which is not perceived by the ordinary man. Furthermore, he must be able, by the aid of his imagination, to describe his vision in appropriate words and figures and thus to present it clearly and concretely to the eyes of his fellow men. Finally, the prevailing conception of poetry demands that it shall be rhythmic in form. This essential characteristic may be expressed by the rhythm of regular metre, as in Greek poetry; by the rhythmic sound conveyed by the concluding words of each line, as in most English poetry; or by the rhythm of recurring thought. Above all, the rhythmic form must be in harmony with the thought or passion which inspires it.

Its early origin

The earliest examples of Babylonian and Egyptian literature are distinctly poetic in form. In ancient Greece the bards began to sing their songs centuries before the appearance of the philosophers and historians. Among the early Germans and English the art of poetic composition developed long before that of prose writing. The Hebrews were no exception to this rule. Scattered through the earliest prose writings of the Old Testament are older fragments of popular poems that were current at the beginnings of Israel's history or inherited from its Semitic past.

The reasons why men first expressed their thoughts in poetry are not difficult to discover. They are illustrated by the natural impulses of the child, which to-day faithfully reflect certain of the initial stages in the

The reasons why early man used poetry

development of the human race. With him imagination and rhythm, two of the chief characteristics of all poetry, are innate. To dance and skip is for him more natural than to walk. Poetry, with its rhythmic measure and strong appeal to the imagination, is remembered long after plain prose has been forgotten. Nature also tends to emphasize the rhythmic tendencies inherent in the human soul. The rise and fall of the waves, the rhythmic swaying of the trees, the changing phases of the sun and moon, the regularly recurring cycles of the seasons left their deep impression upon primitive man. In him that which was rhythmic found a quick response, even as does martial or rhythmic music in the modern child. The expression of thought or passion in literature was not easy for early peoples. It was only under the impelling influence of a strong, creative force that they overcame the inertia and clothed their ideas in words. It was natural and practically inevitable that the product of that creative force should be poetry. Thus the shepherd prophet Amos, under the influence of a clear vision of impending danger and of a powerful religious and patriotic emotion, voiced his warnings to the nobles of northern Israel in exalted poetic diction. The divine truth had taken possession of him and nothing less than poetry could express the conviction and message that burned within him.

General characteristics of Semitic poetry

The monuments of Babylonia and Egypt have shown that the general characteristics of Hebrew poetry were not peculiar to the Israelites but were shared in common with the Semitic nations that preceded them. The old Sumerian and Babylonian accounts of creation and the ancient hymns sung to the gods by the early inhabitants of the Tigris-Euphrates valley were characterized (1) by a measured beat recurring in succeeding lines and (2) by the rhythm of thought; that is, the second or succeeding lines repeating or else developing the thought of the first line. This same rhythm of measured beat and recurring thought is found in the earliest Egyptian hymns. In many of these poems each succeeding line had three accented syllables. More rarely the four-beat measure prevailed. From the middle of the nineteenth century B.C. comes a noble Egyptian hymn, addressed to Sesostris III, which not only illustrates these fundamental characteristics of Hebrew poetry but is also in the form of six strophes of ten lines each. In Egyptian poetry, however, as well as in the Babylonian, the strophic rhythm appears to have been occasional and exceptional rather than the general rule. The thought always dominated the form, and bold departures from the prevailing measured beat are not uncommon. The same is true of early Arabic poetry. While there are many recurring refrains, a regular strophic or metrical structure is exceptional. It was not until Greek culture began to exert a powerful influence upon Arabic and Syriac poetry that the regular metre with measured syllables first appeared in Semitic literature.

The rhythm of measured beat in Hebrew poetry

True to its Semitic inheritance, the fundamental characteristics of Hebrew poetry are the measured beat and the rhythm of thought or sentence. Under the influence of the Greek and Roman ideals of poetry, scholars have for centuries sought to find in the poetry of the Old Testament a metre dependent upon the quality and quantity of the syllables. A few of the

late psalms may conform to this standard, but otherwise the quest, as might be anticipated in the light of the Semitic inheritance, has been in vain. Apparently the Hebrew poet considered only the accented syllables. The genius of the Hebrew language gave him considerable liberty in this respect, for it enabled him to combine, as his needs required, certain short words so that they might be pronounced together with one accent. The music, which was a frequent, if not the constant accompaniment of early Hebrew poetry, likewise favored the measured accentuation of succeeding lines. It is probable that the poets in reciting their poems were allowed large freedom. Many of them, like the earlier Babylonian and Egyptian poets, frequently departed from their adopted measure, especially at the beginning and end of stanzas. In general the tendency was to begin with a longer and to close a stanza with a shorter line. Sometimes the Hebrew poets passed abruptly from one kind of measured beat to another. Thus a part of the charm of the peerless twenty-third Psalm is that it begins in the first stanza with the three-beat, passes in the second to the four-beat, and rises in the last stanza to the five-beat measure.

Use and significance of the different measures

The two-beat measure was used but rarely. Its staccato notes were well adapted to express the trumpet note of warning on the appearance of a foreign foe or for use in the popular songs that accompanied the rapid dance. By far the most common measure or metre (using the word in its broadest sense) adopted by the Hebrew poets was the three-beat. It was admirably adapted to the length of the ordinary brief, forceful sentence and enabled the poet to present his thoughts in rapid, effective sequence. The four-beat measure was used but rarely. It was employed by Amos in the vigorous argument which he introduced in the latter part of the third chapter of his prophecy and not infrequently by the psalmists with impressive force. Next to the three-beat the five-beat measure was used most frequently by Israel's poets. It was really a combination of the three-beat with the short two-beat measure. The latter, like a catch in the breath, suggested with rare effectiveness the deep emotion that filled the heart of the poet. In later days it was the characteristic measure employed in the lamentations uttered over the bier of the dead. Jeremiah's impassioned warnings and appeals to his erring countrymen are all expressed in this dramatic measure. It was also used, as by the second Isaiah and the authors of many of the psalms, to voice the profound emotions of praise and thanksgiving which breathe through these immortal poems. Very rarely, as in Psalm 127, the six-beat measure is found. Thus, not only by their words and thoughts and gestures, but by the poetic measures which they employed and by the cadence of succeeding sentences, Israel's poets were able to appeal to the trained instincts of their hearers and to convey their ideas with a remarkable completeness and emotional coloring. One of the chief charms of the Authorized Version is that its translators instinctively reproduced, to a great extent, the lilt of the Hebrew, although they printed all poetry as prose. In the present text an attempt has been made to reproduce, as far as is practicable in an exact translation, the measured cadence of the original Hebrew.

INTRODUCTION

The rhythm of thought

A characteristic of Hebrew poetry, even more fundamental than the cadence of measured beat, was the rhythm of thought in succeeding lines. By its modern discoverer, Bishop Lowth, it was called parallelism, although the term is not entirely exact. To the Western ear repetition of thought is tautological, and tautology is displeasing; but to the Israelites the essence of poetry was the rhythm of idea. Unquestionably this fundamental characteristic of Hebrew added greatly to its clarity and effectiveness. If the thought was not fully expressed in the first line it could be brought out clearly in the second. This type of rhyme bound the different members of the verse close together and gave to Hebrew poetry its forceful, didactic quality. It was also far easier for the poet to conform to the canons imposed by the rhythm of thought than to the more mechanical demands of a formal metre or rhyme. Thus the Hebrew type of rhythm, instead of impeding, greatly facilitated the free and effective expression of the poet's thought.

Synonymous parallelism

Three primal types of parallelism or rhythm of thought may be distinguished. The first is the synonymous or repeating parallelism in which the second line repeats the thought of the first in slightly variant form. Sometimes it amounts to practical reiteration, as in Isaiah 15^{1}:

> In a night Ar of Moab was devastated, ruined,
> In a night Kir of Moab was devastated, ruined.

More frequently the principal words in the second line are synonyms of the corresponding words in the first line, as, for example, in Psalm 51^{7}:

> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean,
> Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

This synonymous or repeating parallelism is by far the most common type in lyric poetry. It lent itself naturally to the expression of emotion and the results of quiet meditation.

Antithetic parallelism

The second type was the antithetic or contrasting parallelism in which the second line presented a parallel and yet contrasting idea. This form was very rare in lyric poetry, but was frequently used by the wisdom writers, for dramatic contrast is a most valuable aid in impressing an important truth, especially upon the minds of the young. The following are examples of this type:

> A fool's anger is known at once,
> But a sensible man overlooks an insult. (Pr. 12^{16}.)
> Better the little that the righteous have
> Than the wealth of many wicked men. (Ps. 37^{16}.)

Synthetic parallelism

The third type was a synthetic or developing parallelism in which the thought of the first line is completed or expanded in the second or succeeding lines. This form was especially fitted to express developed thought and

complex emotion and was frequently employed by the gnomic as well as the lyric poets. Thus Proverbs 15[3] reads:

> The eyes of Jehovah are in every place,
> Keeping watch over the evil and the good.

Emblematic parallelism

Certain other less common types of parallelism are found. These are in reality more complex developments of the three primal types. One is emblematic parallelism, in which a common experience or truth is illustrated by a comparison usually drawn from nature:

> As cold water to a thirsty man,
> So are good news from a far country. (Pr. 25[25].)

In Psalm 37[1] the first two lines are in a synonymous parallelism, the third and fourth illustrate the emblematic type, while the second of two couplets stands in synthetic relation to the first:

> Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,
> Nor be envious of those who do wrong,
> For as grass they will quickly wither,
> And like the green herb fade away.

Stair-like parallelism

Another type is the stair-like or chain-like parallelism in which a word or thought in one line is taken up and expanded in each succeeding line. It is in reality a developed form of the synthetic parallelism. Thus, Psalm 24[8b, c] reads:

> Who is the King of glory?
> Jehovah strong and mighty,
> Jehovah mighty in battle.

And Psalm 3[1, 2]:

> O Jehovah, how many are my foes!
> Many are rising up against me;
> Of me many are saying:
> 'For him there is no help.'

Introverted parallelism

A third type is the introverted or enveloped parallelism in which the first and last lines are closely parallel to each other and the intervening lines expand the thought of the first. This type is, therefore, a combination of the synonymous and synthetic parallelism. A good illustration is found in Psalm 30[8-10]:

> To thee, O Jehovah, I call and make supplication;
> What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit?
> Can the dust give thee praise, make known thy faithfulness?
> Oh hear and be gracious, become to me a helper.

Strophes and refrains

A third type of rhythm frequently employed with great effectiveness by the Hebrew poets may be designated as the strophic, in which each succeeding stanza of a poem repeated in different form or else expanded the thought of the preceding stanzas. Clear examples of this type of rhythm are found in Amos 4^{6-11}, where each stanza of four lines repeats the same note of warning and ends with the powerful refrain:

Yet ye have not returned to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

In Isaiah 9^{8}–10^{4}, with its original conclusion, now incorporated in $5^{26-29, 25c, f}$, is found a powerful poem describing Jehovah's successive judgments upon lawless Israel. It consists of five strophes, each containing fourteen lines and ending in the dramatic words:

For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

Similarly, Psalms 42 and 43 originally constituted one poem of three stanzas, each with the concluding formula (found in $42^{5, 11}$, 43^{5}):

Why art thou cast down, O my soul,
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the help of my countenance and my guide.

Rhythm of strophe

The strophic arrangement of the verses was exceedingly common, especially in the later poetry. Frequently it has been obscured by the additions of later scribes. It was not, however, a universal characteristic of Hebrew poetry, and the attempt of certain modern scholars to restore all Hebrew poetry to this strophic form is both misleading and disastrous, for to carry through this theory they are often forced to delete many words and sentences which are clearly original and to disregard the logical connection of the thought and the literary unity of the whole. The Hebrew poets, as a rule, refused to be bound by the bonds of an exact strophic structure. To them the clear, forceful expression of their message was far more important than its external form. Although the thought of the earlier Hebrew poets is rarely confined to the narrow limitations of a strophic structure, there is usually a rhythmic parallelism which binds together the succeeding stanzas and greatly increases the clarity and effectiveness of their poems.

Occasional characteristics

The ordinary rhyme employed in modern English and German poetry, which is the recurrence of the same sound at the end of succeeding lines, was not a fundamental but only an occasional characteristic of Hebrew poetry. The clearest illustrations are found in the snatches of popular song preserved in the book of Judges. The riddle propounded by Samson at his bridal feast is a rhyme which has been felicitously translated by Professor Moore:

Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet.

Samson's reply to the Philistines, when they had found out through his wife the answer to his riddle, ends in the two Hebrew words *eglathî* and *hidathî*, and may be rendered:

> If with my heifer you did not plow,
> You had not solved my riddle, now!

The song, which is attributed to Samson's foes, also contains four rhyming words in three succeeding lines that may be rendered:

> Our god has brought low,—
> Under our sway, our foe,
> He who wrought our country's woe,
> Who slew many of us at a blow.

The closing words of Psalm 6 and of Job 10^{9-18} also rhyme; but outside of these few examples this external characteristic is found very rarely in Hebrew poetry. It was apparently confined to the popular songs and was regarded as undesirable by Israel's great poets.

Assonance and paronomasia

More common in the prophets is assonance or paronomasia. Isaiah makes an effective play on the similar sounds of the two Hebrew words *mishpāt* and *mispāh* and *çedākā* and *çĕʿākā*, which may be rendered:

> He looked for justice, but beheld injustice,
> For redress, but beheld a cry of distress. (Is. 5^{7}.)

Amos also, in the vision recorded in $8^{1, 2}$, plays upon the meaning of similarly sounding words (*kăyiç* and *kēç*), the one meaning *summer fruit* and the other *end*. More common in the later poetry, but more artificial, was the acrostic. Thus, for example, in Nahum 1, in the first four chapters of Lamentations, and in many psalms, as, for example, Psalm 119, each succeeding line or group of lines begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Literary characteristics of Hebrew poetry

To the modern Western reader the charm of Hebrew poetry is found not in its external form but in its innate literary characteristics. As a rule, it is highly subjective in content but objective and concrete in its form of expression. The inner feelings of the poet are vividly pictured by means of illustrations drawn from the realm of nature or from common physical experiences. The picturesque Hebrew language, in which each word suggests a familiar picture or feeling or action, lent itself readily to the poet's use. The lack of abstract terms also compelled him to express himself concretely. Expressing his emotions in the terms of physical sensations, the Hebrew poet with true psychological skill was able to arouse the same emotions in the minds of his hearers. These sensations were also elemental and therefore limited to no race or age. The result is that to-day, in reading the psalms, we not only grasp the thought of the psalmist but also feel with him the fear or the passion or the joy that stirred his soul as he wrote.

Hebrew poetry is also characterized by its spontaneity and earnestness. The Semitic mind is naturally intense, and the painful experiences through which the Israelites passed emphasized this characteristic. The attention of the reader is quickly attracted and constantly held by the sheer power of the poet's earnestness. Frequent changes in speaker and point of view impart to Hebrew poetry a strong dramatic quality. At the same time it is vivid and graphic. The Hebrew poets are keenly alive to the importance of variety and contrast. They are always simple but rarely if ever descend to the trite and commonplace. The clearness of their thought is not impeded by cumbersome phrases or unfamiliar illustrations. As a rule, their style is sententious. Instead of piling clause upon clause, they prefer the simple couplet. In this respect their style resembles that of the Semitic story-tellers, who constantly depend upon the simple connective *and* rather than upon the more elaborate conjunctions. Above all, the Hebrew poets confine themselves largely to themes of common human interest. They dramatically portray, in language simple, vivid, and concrete, the vital experiences shared by all mankind. Above all, they are inspired by a noble yet practical moral purpose that enables them to satisfy elemental needs. It is not strange that Hebrew poetry has attracted and held the attention of all classes as no other literature known to man.

II

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HEBREW POETRY

Reasons why the Hebrews were a race of poets

It is significant that more than half of the literature that has come down from the early Hebrews is poetry. There are many reasons why their greatest writers were poets. To the Greeks the world of nature was not attractive, and there are comparatively few allusions to it in the literature of that race. The Hebrews, however, were in closest touch with nature, and the picturesque, varied land of Palestine spoke inspiringly to its early inhabitants. Above all, the Hebrews saw in nature the external manifestations of Jehovah's character. The fructifying rains, the destructive storms, the droughts, the locust plagues, in fact, all the striking phenomena of their widely diversified land, were believed by the Hebrews to come directly from Jehovah. Nearly every hilltop was crowned by a sanctuary where the early inhabitants worshipped the God of the mountains and the hills. The trees were the symbol of his life-giving power and of his everlasting care. Each gushing spring testified to his gracious provision for the needs of his creatures. All nature spoke to them of God and hence inspired them with emotions of reverence and trust and gratitude.

Prominence of the religious element

The ancestors of the Hebrews came from the stern life of the desert, which developed a constant sense of dependence and intense loyalty to the God of the tribe and nation. Hence they and their descendants were by nature and training deeply religious. And religion (in its larger meaning) is the most powerful force that can stir the heart of the poet. The perilous, warlike life of the Hebrews in Palestine also constantly fostered and further developed their sense of constant dependence upon Jehovah and the habit of attributing every event in their history to his direct intervention. The tragic, harrowing experiences that came to them during the later centuries aroused within them the deepest emotions of which man is capable, and thus inspired and practically compelled them to express their thoughts and feelings in poetry. The liturgical demands of the later ritual also led the faithful Jews who gathered about the second temple to voice their experiences in the psalms which are found in the Psalter. Thus, throughout all of Israel's history, most of the forces which produce poetry were actively at work.

The different periods in the history of Hebrew poetry

Three fairly well-defined periods may be distinguished in the development of classic Hebrew poetry. The first is the age of popular songs. It begins with the entrance of the Hebrews into Canaan, about 1150, and extends to the period of Amos, about 750 B.C. The second is the prophetic period, which begins with Amos in 750 and ends with the work of the second Isaiah, about 450 B.C. The third is the age of devotional and wisdom

poetry. It begins about 450, to which date may be assigned the main poetical sections of the books of Job, and extends to about 50 B.C., when the apocryphal book known as the Wisdom of Solomon was probably written. The poetical books of the Old Testament, therefore, represent a period of at least eleven centuries. They are clearly the work of scores of different writers. Certain of the songs found in Genesis and Numbers, as, for example, the so-called Song of Lamech in Genesis 4 and the Song of the Well in Numbers 21[17-18], come in all probability from the early nomadic period preceding the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan.

Early folk-songs

The few folk-songs and early poems that have been preserved in the historical books of the Old Testament suffice to suggest the character of this once extensive poetic literature. Evidently all the important events in the early life of the Hebrews were celebrated with songs and music. Although the Song of Songs itself is late, it has preserved a group of popular poems that were apparently sung in connection with the wedding festivals. They are in many ways the best representatives of the popular poetry of ancient Israel. Similarly, songs were sung in connection with national calamities and beside the bier of the dead. Many of these dirges have been preserved. Amos 6[3] also contains a reference to the songs that were sung in connection with the banquets given by the voluptuous nobles of northern Israel. The Song of the Well in Numbers 21 is evidently a type of the popular songs that were composed by the local poets on the occasion of any important event in the life of a tribe or the nation. Isaiah 14[4] and 23[16] contain examples of the taunt songs that were sung over a fallen enemy or to cast disgrace upon a private or public foe. Great deliverances like that of the exodus, or victories like that of the Hebrews beside the Kishon, inspired the poets to sing of the achievements of their heroes. These songs appear to have been chanted by the women, as in the days of David, when the victorious warriors returned from battle laden with spoils. Scattered through the historical books there are also many priestly oracles, such as that attributed to Jacob in Genesis 49, and public prayers, like that of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, now found in the Greek versions of I Kings 8[12, 13]. Their original poetic form is still retained and they all testify to the prominent place that poetry held in the early life of the Israelites.

Ancient bards and song-books

Numbers 21[27] and II Samuel 19[35] contain references to a class of bards or singers who doubtless composed many of these songs and preserved in oral form those which had been handed down from preceding generations. They correspond to the similar class of singers who are still found among the Arabs of the desert and who recite beside the camp-fires the songs that tell of the adventures of the tribe and the achievements of its popular heroes. In I Samuel 25[28] there is a reference to the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah* which is evidently a collection of songs recording the victories won by the Israelites in the name of Jehovah. A similar collection of ancient songs, which has unfortunately been lost, was the *Book of Jasher;* that is, *The Book of the Upright.* Jasher is evidently a popular designation of the nation, Israel. The quotations (*e. g.*, Josh. 10[13b], II Sam. 1[18], I Kgs. 8[53], Gk.) indicate that these poems dealt with important events in Israel's history, such as David's

lament over the death of Saul and Jonathan or Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. These references and quotations also suggest the wide variety and extent of the popular Hebrew poetry, most of which has, unfortunately, been forever lost.

The prophetic period of Hebrew poetry

The character and content of the prophetic poetry which comes from the second period of Israel's literary history have already been discussed in Volume III. The poetic addresses of the prophets were the natural outgrowth of the early oracles which appear to have been invariably cast in poetic form. In presenting their messages the prophets used almost every type of poetry known to the Hebrew. With the exception of portions of Ezekiel, Haggai, and Zechariah, their original oral prophecies were always put in the form of poetry. By them the lyrical note, which was struck by the earlier prophets, was still further developed and the foundations laid for that still wider development of lyrical poetry which characterized the third period of Israel's literary history. Doubtless, during the same prophetic period many of the proverbs and some of the psalms, which have ultimately found a place in the book of Proverbs and the Psalter, were current on the lips of the people. It was this second prophetic period of Israel's history that gave to the race the ideas and the impulses which found expression in the retrospective and didactic literature of the third period.

The poetry of the third period

During the third period Israel's poetry assumed two distinct forms. The lyrical group is represented by the Psalter, the occasional psalms in the first book of Maccabees, in the concluding chapters of Ben Sira, and in the Psalter of Solomon. This group reflects the experiences, the emotions, and the aspirations of the Jewish race and of the different classes within Judaism. The other group includes the gnomic or wisdom literature found in Proverbs, portions of Ecclesiastes, Ben Sira, the Wisdom of Solomon, and in the crowning work of the Hebrew sages—the book of Job. It is the result of the earnest desire of Israel's latest teachers to make practical and effective in the life of their own and succeeding generations that which was best in the moral and religious experiences of the past and most vital in the teachings of earlier priests and prophets.

The drama and the epic

The drama was not a product of the Semitic mind. Thus far no drama has been found in the literatures of ancient Babylonia and Egypt. The Hebrew prophets, in their poetic addresses, frequently employed dialogue. Ezekiel reveals great dramatic qualities, and one of the chief charms of Hebrew literature is its dramatic character; but the Israelites produced no pure drama. The book of Job is the nearest approximation to it, yet its action and progress are subjective rather than objective. Furthermore, the Old Testament contains no clear example of an epic. The song of Deborah has many epic qualities, but it is more than mere poetic presentation, for through it all runs a large lyric element. Its brevity also forbids its classification as a pure epic, for less than twenty verses are devoted to heroic narration. The epic, however, was not foreign to the Semitic mind. One of the earliest and noblest examples of early Babylonian literature is the so-called epic of Gilgamesh, which in a series of twelve cantos tells of the various deeds of the traditional hero Gilgamesh, who was the prototype of

the Greek Hercules. The marked epic character of Israel's early narratives, the frequent references to older poetic sources, and the fact that the prose narrators at many points quote from early poetic sources favor, although they do not absolutely prove, that the Hebrews once possessed a great epic which described in connected form the earlier events in their national history and the deeds of their great heroes. Fortunately, we possess the prose (which may have been the original and only) version of that national epic.

Reasons why the lyric over-shadowed all other types of Hebrew poetry

The most characteristic product of Hebrew poetic genius is the lyric. This type of poetry was originally intended to be sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument, and expresses the individual emotions of the poet or of those for whom he speaks. Like most Semitic poetry, it is highly subjective, although its figures are often exceedingly concrete. The dominance of the lyric note in Hebrew literature is due to a variety of causes. It was primarily owing to the peculiar genius of the race. The Hebrews were pre-eminently individualists. The personal and racial points of view are prominent in all of their early writings. The extremely simple structure of the Hebrew language also favors the lyric rather than the more complex forms of poetry. Furthermore, as has been noted, the chief motive in their life was religion, and the lyric is the most natural expression of religious feeling. The great crises through which the Hebrews passed and the many painful experiences which came to them aroused the deepest personal emotions and intensified their tendency to develop the lyric.

While this type of poetry is distinctly individualistic, there is also a strong universalistic note running through the lyric poetry of the Old Testament. It is, in part, because the experiences of Israel's poets were common to the human race. In the psalms many chords are struck which find a quick response in the heart of man in every age and race. The result is that in much of the lyric poetry of the Old Testament there is a timeless quality which expresses the universal experiences and emotions of humanity.

The grouping of the Hebrew lyrics

The lyric poetry of the Old Testament represents the work of many different poets who wrote under the impulse of a great variety of emotions and in widely separated periods in Israel's history. The oldest as well as the latest poems in the Old Testament are lyrics. In their present form they are either scattered through the historical books or else massed together in the Psalter without any definite system of arrangement. In order to utilize them for reading, study, or even devotional purposes, it is important that they be classified. The primary need is to group together those poems which are written from the same point of view and with kindred aims. The first canon of classification, therefore, is that of authorship. Each of the three great groups of Israel's teachers, the prophets, the priests, and the sages, contributed certain of the lyric poems now found in the Psalter. Most of the lyric poems fall under one of the three heads, prophetic, priestly, or didactic. A still more fundamental canon in the classification of lyric poetry is the dominant emotion, whether it be that of exultation or aspiration, as in certain of the early tribal songs; or of sadness, as in the dirges found in the book of Lamentations; or of thanksgiving, of praise, of

adoration, of penitence, or of worship, as in the different psalms of the Psalter. A few psalms reflect a wide variety of emotions, but the great majority may be readily classified in accordance with this canon.

The trend from the national to the individual point of view

Before the exile the chief note in Israel's life was either the pride or aspiration of the tribe or nation. After the exile the Jews for four centuries turned from their narrow national ambitions and from trust in their own resources to Jehovah as their one source of joy, glory, and deliverance. As the nation went down in ruin the individual for the first time emerged into prominence. The result is that the personal note becomes ever clearer in the poetry that comes from the four centuries beginning with the Babylonian exile. Adoration, praise, and thanksgiving, expressive of triumph not of the sword but of faith, or else the note of penitence and fervent petition, filled the hearts and found expression through the lips and pens of the faithful who worshipped at the second temple. This unmistakable trend from the national to the individual point of view suggests the canon to be followed in determining the order of the larger groups of poems. Within each group it is also important to arrange the poems, as far as possible, in their chronological order, thus furnishing a basis for an historical study of the different phases in the development of Israel's faith.

The triumphal odes

The oldest group of Hebrew lyrics are the folk or national songs. These fall naturally into four general divisions: (1) triumphal odes, (2) traditional oracles, (3) dirges, and (4) love and wedding songs. The triumphal odes were sometimes sung by the warriors but in early Israel more commonly by the women after a great deliverance, like that of the exodus, or a great victory, as that over the Canaanites beside the Kishon. They preserved in this popular, poetic form the memory of the great events and achievements in Israel's history and, therefore, have found a place among Israel's historical records. Out of these triumphal odes there developed, under the changed conditions which resulted from the Babylonian exile, the imprecatory psalms in which the inherited hatred and the burning sense of injustice with which the Jews regarded their heathen persecutors found fervent and often to us repulsive expression. Out of the older triumphal odes also developed the hymns of praise, thanksgiving, and adoration addressed to Jehovah by his afflicted yet trusting people. A third group included the majestic psalms describing Jehovah's leadership of his people in the past and the way in which he had delivered them from their foes. Through many of these runs the spirit of the old triumphal odes, even though the victories which they commemorate took place centuries before.

The traditional oracles

Another early form of Hebrew lyric poetry may be designated as the traditional oracle. In these poems the experiences and aspirations of later generations were put in the mouths of the early fathers and leaders of the race, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. These memories and hopes were cast in the characteristic poetic form of the ancient prophetic oracles. Many such traditional oracles are incorporated in the historical books. Most of them are older than their prose setting. Out of these grew in later times the great oral prophecies of the pre-exilic period and the psalms which embody the messianic hopes of the exilic and post-exilic periods. The

Jewish apocalypses, as, for example, those in the second part of the book of Daniel, are still later modifications and expansions (but in prose form) of the earlier oracles.

The dirge

The third primitive type of lyric poetry is the dirge. Public lamentations for the dead may be traced back to the beginnings of Semitic history. In the days of the ancient Sumerian king Gudea professional mourners were employed to sing songs of lament over the bier of the dead. They were probably connected with the temples. One class was known as the wailers, another as the howlers. They included both men and women. These lamentations were usually accompanied by music. The plaintive music of the harp and flute was best suited to the spirit of these dirges. The song of lament and the praise of the departed were voiced by the leader, while the chorus joined in the refrain. In the famous old Babylonian epic the hero Gilgamesh laments over his dead friend Eabani:

Thou takest no part in the noble feast,
To the assembly they call thee not.
Thou liftest not the bow from the ground;
What is hit by the bow is not for thee;
Thy hand grasps not the club nor strikes the prey,
Nor stretches thy foemen dead on the earth.
The wife thou lovest thou kissest not,
The wife thou hatest thou strikest not.
The child thou lovest thou kissest not,
The child thou hatest thou strikest not.
The might of the earth has swallowed thee.
O Darkness, Darkness, Mother Darkness!
Thou enfoldest him like a mantle,
Like a deep well thou enclosest him!

The Hebrew mourning customs

The Hebrew mourning customs apparently preserved those which had been followed for thousands of years in the ancient Semitic world and still prevail in the lands of the East. The relatives of the deceased, and especially the hired mourners, were clad in sackcloth made from the hair of goats or camels (II Sam. 21[10], Is. 15[3]). With dishevelled locks, with bare feet and legs, often cutting their hair and mutilating their features, they threw themselves down beside the dead or else sat on the ground casting dust upon their heads (II Sam. 15[30], Is. 3[26], Jer. 16[6]). Among these Hebrews the majority of these hired mourners were women, although male mourners are mentioned (Jer. 9[17], II Chr. 35[25]). Ordinarily, the mourners fasted during the daytime (I Sam. 31[13], II Sam. 3[35]). At sunset the funeral feast was held. The wild shrieks and weird cries uttered by the hired mourners in the East to-day make vivid the scenes about the graves of the dead in ancient Israel.

Their psychological basis

In the old Babylonian epic the laments of Gilgamesh secured immortality for his friend Eabani; but this does not appear to have been the original psychological basis of the death dirge. Not until the later Jewish period

did the belief in individual immortality gain acceptance even among the Israelites. It is more probable that in earliest days the cries of the mourners were intended to placate or keep away the spirits of the dead. This reason well explains the cutting of the beard and the mutilating of the body. The heathen origin of these rites explains why they were prohibited by the later Jewish law (Lev. 19[27, 28]). It is possible, however, that, as among many peoples to-day, the belief prevailed that the spirit of the dead lingered for a time near the body of the deceased and that offerings presented to it and songs sung in his honor gave joy to the departed. In modern Palestine the tombs of Moslem saints are often covered with gifts presented by their descendants or by the natives who venerate the sacred spot. In the biblical laments that have been preserved the chief motive seems to be to commemorate the achievements of the fallen hero or to express the sorrow of the friends who survive. The emotional Oriental undoubtedly finds great relief and a certain melancholy pleasure in these dramatic expressions of his grief.

The two kinds of dirges

Two kinds of dirges are found in the Old Testament. In the one an individual hero is the object of the poet's grief; in the other a city or nation. The oldest and in many ways the noblest example of the Hebrew lament is the dirge which David sang over Saul and Jonathan. It opens with a stanza in the quick, two-beat measure which gradually rises to the three and four beat and describes the greatness of the calamity that had befallen Israel. The royal poet David then goes on to describe the bravery, attractiveness, and achievements of the fallen heroes. Through it all runs the recurring refrain:

How have the mighty fallen!

The dirge which David sang over Abner represents even more closely the popular lament which the hired mourners crooned over the body of the dead. In Jeremiah 22[10] the prophet laments in the same way over the exiled Jehoiahaz, whose fate he likens to that of the dead. The late tradition in II Chronicles 34[25] states that Jeremiah lamented for Josiah and that all the singing men and singing women to this day speak of Josiah in their dirges. In Ezekiel 32[2-10] this priest-prophet of the exile sings a dirge, which is in reality a taunt song, over the Egyptian Pharaoh. The earliest example of the lament over the nation is the dramatic dirge sung by Amos over northern Israel whose coming downfall he thus vividly portrayed (Am. 5[1, 2]). Jeremiah, in the same spirit, puts a dirge in the mouth of the singing women of Judah (Jer. 9[17-22]). Later, in 12[7-12], he laments over the approaching fate of sinful Judah. The prophetic books contain many taunt songs in the form of dirges addressed by the prophet to Israel's hostile foes. Of these the stirring poem in Isaiah 14[4-20], describing the fall of Babylon, Ezekiel's picturesque dirges over the fall of Tyre in chapters 26–28, and the taunt songs over the Philistines, Moabites, Amonites, Edomites, Damascens, the Arabians and even the distant Elamites in Jeremiah 47–49, are the most important. To this group belong the five songs of lamentation now preserved in the book of Lamentations, which represent the culmination of this strong elegiac tendency in Israel's thought and literature.

III

THE STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

Aim

THE book of Lamentations is the most conventional and stereotyped of all the Old Testament writings. Four of its five chapters consist of acrostics in which each succeeding verse or group of verses begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Even though the fifth chapter is not an acrostic, it has twenty-two verses corresponding to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. In the first and second chapters each verse contains three lines, in the fourth a couplet of but two lines. These rigid limitations in structure necessarily impede the free development of the thought. While these dirges lack the freedom and spontaneity of many other Hebrew poems they are not deficient in strong emotion and contain a remarkably vivid portrayal of the incidents and experiences connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. The poet's reason for employing the acrostic structure was evidently to aid the memory. His motive in writing was liturgical, that is, to furnish hymns that might be readily remembered and chanted, probably in connection with the fasts which were observed in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple. In the seventh chapter of Zechariah the prophet refers to such fasts which in his day had already been observed for seventy years, beginning with the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. In form and content these poems were well adapted to this liturgical use. They kept alive in vivid form the memories of Israel's tragic experience. They aimed to impress upon the minds of the people the lessons taught by their past, "lest they forget." They also aimed to interpret the meaning of those experiences and to justify Jehovah's rigorous dealing with his people, and thus to arouse in the heart of the nation faith and adoration even in the presence of overwhelming calamity. To the historian they are of inestimable value, for they reveal the soul of the race and give contemporary pictures of conditions in Jerusalem in the days preceding and following its overthrow regarding which Israel's historians are almost silent.

Authorship

The position of the book of Lamentations in the English Bible is due to the influence of a tradition preserved in the superscription to the Greek text of Lamentations: *And it came to pass after Israel had been led captive and Jerusalem laid desolate that Jeremiah sat down weeping and lifted up this lament over Jerusalem.* The tradition that Jeremiah was the author of Lamentations may be traced back to the Greek period in the statement of

the Chronicler (II Chr. 35^{25}): *And Jeremiah sang a song of lamentation for Josiah, and all the singing men and women speak of Josiah in their lamentations to this day. And they made them a custom in Israel, and now they are written in Lamentations.* The tradition that Jeremiah was the author of the book of Lamentations was probably suggested by the fact that of all the great Hebrew prophets Jeremiah alone was present to witness the closing scene in Judah's death agony. He also, more frequently than any other prophet, interspersed his prophecies with dirges. His favorite metre was the five-beat, which, since the days of Amos, had been the customary lamentation metre. Many of the expressions and ideas in Lamentations are peculiar to Jeremiah, indicating that, if he did not write these poems, he at least exerted a strong influence upon the thought of those who composed them, so that there is a real underlying basis for the tradition.

The evidence that Jeremiah was not the author of Lamentations is, however, cumulative and on the whole conclusive. It is almost inconceivable that one who so frequently disregarded the rules of Hebrew metre would allow himself to be bound by the artificial limitations of the acrostic. Many of the teachings in Lamentations are also contrary to those of Jeremiah, as, for example, the explanation of the calamities which overtook his nation (cf. 5^{7}) or the estimate of Judah's last king, Zedekiah. (Cf., *e. g.*, 2^{9}, $4^{17, 18, 20}$.) They reflect rather the popular attitude toward the great catastrophe. Many of the characteristic phrases of Ezekiel are woven into these dirges, indicating that their authors were acquainted with the priest-prophet of the exile. Certain of the poems also reflect later situations and points of view. The variations in the order of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet and in the literary style and excellence of the different chapters point clearly to at least two or three different authors.

Date of chapters 2 and 4

Chapters 2 and 4 are the oldest poems in the book and probably come from the same author. Each reveals an intimate familiarity with the tragic events attending the final destruction of the city and temple. The emotions of the author are so strong that they overcome the regular limitations of the acrostic structure. They reflect the feeling of astonishment and stupefaction with which the survivors regarded the great catastrophe. The insane hunger of the women, the helpless misery of the children, the shameless indignities heaped upon the rulers of Judah are portrayed with remarkable vividness and fidelity. The influence of Ezekiel may also be clearly recognized in these chapters. (Cf. 2^{14} and Ezek. 22^{28}.) The downfall of the state is attributed to the misleading teachings of the mercenary priests and prophets. The same unusual order of letters of the Hebrew alphabet is followed in both poems, while in 1 that which became the later order is followed. These poems were probably written in Judah some time between the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 and the liberation of Jehoiachin in 561 B.C., by one who was intimately acquainted with Zedekiah's fatal policy (2^{17}), and was also a devoted supporter of the ill-fated king (4^{20}). They are, therefore, the best contemporary records that we have regarding the experiences and feelings of the Jews in the opening decades of the Babylonian exile.

Date of chapter 1

The poem in chapter 1 is an acrostic in which each succeeding letter of the alphabet is followed by three lines. It has the usual order of the Hebrew alphabet. It vividly pictures the woes following the destruction of Jerusalem. While the feeling and language are less spontaneous than in 2 and 4, it is full of genuine pathos. It strikes many notes which run through the psalms. Jerusalem, however, is no longer entirely without inhabitants, as was probably the case in the days immediately following its destruction by the Chaldeans. The day of Jerusalem's great calamity is already a memory of the past (7) and the description of that event lacks the vividness of chapters 2 and 4. The pitiable lot of those who had come back to live on its ruined site is prominent in the mind of the poet. The taunting, malicious attitude of neighboring peoples is clearly reflected. The culmination of the poem is a fervent petition that Jehovah will speedily take vengeance upon these malignant foes. There is no suggestion that Cyrus had as yet conquered Babylon and granted to the Jews the privilege of rebuilding their sanctuary. The poem, therefore, comes in all probability from a Palestinian poet who wrote during the latter part of the Babylonian period, between 560 and 540 B.C.

Of chapter 5

Chapter 5, like 1, presents a vivid picture of the conditions in the Jewish community during the years following the destruction of Jerusalem. The memories of that event, however, are vague. It was in the days of their fathers that the nation paid the first great penalty for its guilt. For *these many years* (20) Jehovah has apparently forgotten and forsaken his people. The basis of the petition with which the poem concludes is that after these many years the nation has atoned for its guilt and the time has come when Jehovah should pardon and restore. In contrast with 2 and 4 the sense of national guilt is much more prominent, but there is no protestation of innocence, as in the book of Job and in the psalms which come from the middle of the Persian period. There is also no suggestion that the temple has been rebuilt or that the heavy Chaldean yoke has been removed. It is evident, therefore, that this chapter comes from about the same period as 1, that is, the latter half of the Babylonian or early in the Persian period.

Of chapter 3

Chapter 3 differs widely from the other poems in the book of Lamentations. In thought and language it is closely connected with Zechariah, Job, II Isaiah, and many of the psalms. It lacks the spontaneous feeling and vigorous literary style of the other dirges in the book of Lamentations. Its spirit and language are those of the later psalm literature. The first part of the poem is a meditation on Israel's painful experiences in the past. The strong didactic element connects it with the reflective psalms and the work of Israel's wise men which culminated in the Greek period. The tone of this poem is deeply religious. The love and mercy of God are pictured with remarkable effectiveness and appreciation. The poem is apparently made up of fragments of psalms which have been adjusted to the acrostic structure and brought into a loose literary unity. Its dependence upon the later writings of the Old Testament is so great, and it is so far removed from the problems of the Babylonian period, that it is difficult to assign it to a date earlier than the last half of the Persian or the first part of the Greek period.

STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP OF LAMENTATIONS

The author of chapter 3, who may have been the final editor of the book of Lamentations, evidently modelled his work after chapters 2 and 4. He has not only adopted the unusual order of the Hebrew alphabet found in these chapters but also introduced his poem between these two earlier laments. Chapter 1 was probably given its position at the beginning of the book because of its vivid description of the desolation of Jerusalem. It also furnished a fitting introduction to the book as a whole. Chapter 5 was placed at the end because even a casual reader would at once recognize that it reflected conditions a generation or two after the great catastrophe of 586 B.C. It is thus possible to trace with reasonable assurance the growth and history of the little book of Lamentations, which, though one of the shortest books of the Old Testament, represents the work of at least three different authors and reflects the thought of as many centuries. Like many of the psalms, it reflects the unassuaged sorrow but invincible faith and hope in the heart of the Jewish race. Neglected by most modern readers in the Western world, it is the book which voices the woes of the orthodox Jews, who still regard themselves as exiles without a country.

IV

THE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SONG OF SONGS

The history of the Song of Songs

THE Song of Songs, or, as it is known in late tradition, the Song of Solomon, is one of the latest books to be included in the canon of the Old Testament. Not only is it found in the third and latest collection of writings, but its position was questioned by the famous rabbi Aquiba as late as the first half of the second Christian century. Josephus's statement (*Contra Apion* 1^{8}) that twenty-two books were included in the sacred scriptures of his race suggests that by the last quarter of the first Christian century the Song of Songs had already been included by common consent in the canon; but there is a significant absence of any reference to the book in the Jewish and Christian writings preceding this period. Certain references in the Mishna imply that there were some rabbis who still maintained the natural interpretation of the Song of Songs; but it was probably in the end given a place in the canon because of its allegorical interpretation and because it was associated with the name of Solomon.

Its allegorical interpretation

Under the influence of the allegorizing tendencies current in contemporary Greek thought the Jews of Palestine as well as of the dispersion, during the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era, were inclined more and more to read into the earlier scriptures deeper spiritual meanings. To this tendency the Song of Songs, with its fervid Oriental figures and its passionate feeling, readily lent itself. The result was that the ingenuity of the Jewish scribes found in it an elaborate allegorical history of the relations between Jehovah and his people from the days of the exodus to the dawn of the messianic era. Following the example of the Jewish scribes, the early Christian Fathers devoted much attention to the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs. Identifying Christ with the bridegroom, they regarded the bride as the representative either of the Church or else of the soul of the Christian. Huge volumes were written by such scholars as Origen, developing this allegorical interpretation. They remain as monuments to the absurd extreme to which this method leads its followers. In later generations it became a favorite occupation of different commentators to find in it new allegorical meanings. Fully a score of these different allegorical theories have been propounded, each differing from and confounding all others. The blasphemous absurdities of some of these allegorical interpretations to-day need no refutation.

Even during the period when the allegorical method of interpretation

was regnant, saner scholars were found to raise their voices in protest. The brilliant and courageous Theodore of Mopsuestia, who connected the song with the Egyptian marriage of Solomon, was condemned as a heretic by the second council of Constantinople in 553 A.D., and the Church took its stand squarely on the allegorical interpretation of the book. It was not until the Protestant Reformation had unchained the Bible that scholars began again to recognize the natural, naïve character of the Song of Songs.

Its natural interpretation

With the recognition that the Song of Songs was an expression of human love between man and woman, two types of dramatic interpretation arose. According to the one, it is a series of dialogues between King Solomon and his peasant bride. The other dramatic theory found in it three characters: the heroine, a beautiful Shulammite maiden; her shepherd lover, to whom she remained true; and King Solomon, who sought by promises and flattery to win her affections and thus to induce her to remain in his harem. The latter theory is still held, but by a diminishing number of interpreters. It is alluring because of its highly dramatic theme and the practical moral lesson which it sets forth. Its most ardent advocates are forced, however, to confess that at many points the interpretation is based upon the ingenious suggestions of the interpreters rather than upon any definite data contained in the poem itself. Furthermore, the dramatic interpretation assumes the Western ideas and customs of love-making and ignores the fixed customs and very different ideals with which the Eastern world hedges in the institution of marriage. It fails to recognize the fact that the speeches and acts which it implies would have been impossible in an ancient Oriental kingdom, least of all under a despotic monarch like Solomon. Many of the scenes, into which this intricate Western dramatic theory divides the little book of eight chapters, do not at the most require more than a minute, if publicly presented, and the whole less than half an hour. It assumes that the concluding chapter records the Shulammite's farewell to Solomon that she may go and wed her shepherd lover; but in the heart of the book (3^6–5^1) there are repeated references to the public wedding ceremony which imply that this had already taken place.

Its dramatic interpretation

Later studies of the wedding customs that still prevail in Palestine and Syria and of the songs that are sung on these festal occasions leave little doubt regarding the true character and meaning of the Song of Songs. In a famous article published by the German traveller Wettstein, in Bastian's *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* of 1873, a vivid description is given of the wedding ceremonies observed by the inhabitants of the regions east of Jordan and in the vicinity of Damascus. Before the marriage feast, which is held in the evening at the home of the bride's parents, there are processions and songs. The bride, attired in her wedding-garments, with sword in hand, dances before the attendant guests, who sing her charms with characteristic Oriental license. After the wedding there is a seven days' feast called the *King's Week*, in which the bride and groom are daily placed upon an improvised throne and saluted as king and queen. The king, having captured his bride, is acclaimed victor by the attendant guests. Songs are sung in turn by the bride and groom and their friends, describing in detail and without

Light from Palestinian wedding customs

reserve the physical charms of the pretended king and queen. The bride is acclaimed the fairest among women and for a brief time she tastes the joys of regal pomp.

Significance of the historic allusions in the Song of Songs

This custom evidently explains the otherwise obscure references to Solomon and the Shulammite. As Budde has truly said, the historic Solomon figures no more in the Song of Songs than in the Sermon on the Mount, where the lilies are said to be more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory (Mt. 6^{29}). He is simply the grand monarch who in later Oriental tradition was the superlative type of royal magnificence. Thus in 1^5 the sunburnt Shulammite is likened to the curtains of Solomon; in 3^7 the palanquin upon which the bridegroom is borne on his wedding-day is called the litter of Solomon. In memory of Israel's early glories the attendants of the bride are, in 3^{11}, called daughters of Jerusalem and the bridegroom is addressed as King Solomon. In 6^8 the simple love of the bride and groom is contrasted with the artificial splendor of Solomon's harem. In $8^{11, 12}$ the bride contentedly compares her humble lot with Solomon's wealth and magnificence. Similarly, the term *Shulammite* is used interchangeably with the phrase *the most beautiful of women*. It is clearly equivalent to the modern title *queen* that is applied to the peasant bride during her wedding week. It was apparently suggested by the story of Abishag the Shulammite, the fairest maiden of Israel, who was chosen as the consort of David in his old age, and whom, later, Adonijah, the king's oldest son, sought, at the cost of his life, to make his bride (I Kgs. 1^3, 2^{13-25}). The popular story regarding Abishag was well calculated to make a profound impression upon the minds of the peasants of Palestine. Such passages as $1^{4, 12}$ and 6^5 imply that the heroine of the Song of Songs was for the time treated as a queen. In the opening chapter the contrast between the transcendent beauty and royal honors attributed to her by her attendants and her own peasant features and simple tastes is the dominant *motif*.

Biblical references to marriage customs

The Bible contains few references to the details of the ancient Hebrew marriage ceremony. The two famous marriages recorded in the Old Testament are those of Jacob in Genesis 29 and of Samson in Judges 14. In each case the wedding-feast was held in the home of the bride. The culmination of the marriage ceremony was the leading home of the bride by the bridegroom. From Genesis 29^5 it may be inferred that the Hebrew bride was veiled. Both the bride and the bridegroom were accompanied by attendant friends. Jeremiah 7^{34} refers to the *voice of the bridegroom* and *the voice of the bride*, implying that in ancient times, as to-day, they joined with their friends in the wedding-songs which were then sung.

Modern Palestinian wedding-songs

Dalman, in his *Palästinischer Diwan*, has confirmed and supplemented the data earlier collected by Wettstein regarding the Palestinian wedding customs. On the day preceding the wedding-feast the bride comes out from her home dressed in her wedding-garments, bearing two torches in her hand, and sings certain songs in which the attendant maidens and occasionally the bridegroom respond or take up the refrain. At certain points one female singer joins in and the chorus repeats the verse. Two versions of this antenuptial bride song or parade song, as it is called, have been preserved (Dal-

man, 254–261). The Nazareth version, in which the attendant guests first speak, may be translated as follows:

Attendants:
March hither, in the name of God, thou Fair One,
Thou rose in the garden of flowers!
The carnation blossom, O bride,
And the jasmin o'ershadow us.

Stand up. Mount thy throne;
The doves coo to thee,
The queen herself ministers to thee,
Thou Arab maiden, thou fair one!

Stand up! go into the guest room.
See, what does thy bridegroom lack!
O my lord, he increases his wealth
That he may liberally give thee the purse of gold.

Bridegroom:
She went past me with Egyptian earrings,
All the fish of the sea bestir themselves;
I will bring thee to my breast,
And lay thee to sleep on the heavenly bed.

Attendants:
When they came to bring thee,
They set thee on the wagon;
They paid a hundred lira to thy father, O thou bride!
O thou bride, thou fair one!

Bridegroom:
Stand up and come to me,
Thou with the rose red garment,
By the life of thy distinguished father
O bride, as thou marchest about.

Attendants:
She puts on the wooden shoes to walk about,
In order to walk about until she eats at night—
'By the life of my father I eat not
Without a great number of songs.'

Bridegroom:
Remain standing proudly before me,
O sweet one, thou hast disturbed my mind.
And the gain—thou art my possession,
O thou bride, O my eyes!

Attendants:
The daughter of nobles marches about
With two kindled torches—
Rise up. Mount thy high throne,
By the life of thy esteemed father.

Bride:
By the life of my father I go not up
Without eight maid-servants:
Two on account of the fashion,
Two on account of the room,
Two to loosen my buttons,
Two for the heavenly bed.

Songs sung by the bride's attendants

Similar songs are sung by the attendants when the bride is given to the groom and also when the bridegroom receives the bride. The one sung by two of the wedding guests when the bride is given to the groom concludes with the words:

When thou goest into the garden of flowers, sittest in thy happiness
By God, think of us and we will not forget thee.

Songs are also sung as the bride dances before the guests. In one song the bride sings the first half of the line, as she dances, while the chorus answers with the second half. All the attendant guests beat the time by clapping their hands.

A late collection of Hebrew love and marriage songs

These modern wedding customs furnish the key for the interpretation of the Song of Songs. Many figures and allusions that are meaningless to the Western reader become clear in the light of still existing Oriental customs. The Hebrew text, by means of its verbal and pronominal forms, also indicates, in nearly every case, the gender of the one addressed. The Song of Songs is not a drama but a collection of love and marriage songs sung or recited in connection with the different scenes in the ancient Hebrew wedding ceremony. Apparently, they are arranged in the same general order in which they were used, although many rearrangements have been proposed by modern scholars. They were written from the same point of view and probably all put in form by the same editor. The presence of certain Aramaic, Greek, and Persian words, and the constant use of the late form of the Hebrew relative pronoun, indicate that they were probably written during the Greek period.

Suggestions of literary unity

Their dramatic form may also reflect the influence of contact with Greek literature and thought. There are suggestions throughout these songs of a certain literary unity. Thus, for example, the bride is repeatedly spoken of as a garden (*e. g.*, 4^{12}, $6^{2, 3}$). This figure, however, is still used in the modern Arab wedding-songs. It is also found in an ancient Egyptian song which a maiden sang to her lover. Here, however, the lover, not the bride, is likened to a garden. This Egyptian poem also suggests many other points of likeness with the Song of Songs:

I am thy favorite sister,
And thou art to me as a garden,
Which I have planted with flowers
And all kinds of fragrant herbs.
Fair is the spot, where'er we be,
If only thy hand is laid upon mine;
Pensive is our mood and happy our heart,
Because we are together.
To hear thy voice is like a draught of wine,
And to listen to thee is life to me!
To see thee is better far
To me than eating and drinking!

Throughout the Song of Songs the bridegroom is likened to King Solomon and the bride's attendants are spoken of as the daughters of Jerusalem. But this was but a part of the dramatic symbolism which characterizes even the modern Palestinian wedding. Another mark of unity is the keen appreciation of the simple beauties of nature that runs through all the songs. An allusion like that in 1^{6} to the bride's features, browned by the sun because of her life out in the vineyards, is explained in a later song (8^{12}). Similar refrains recur throughout the book, as, for example, in 2^{17}, 4^{6}, and 8^{14}. The following refrain, in slightly variant forms, concludes several of the songs (2^{7}, 3^{5}, 8^{4}):

I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
That you stir not up nor awaken love until it please.

Love-songs

In the opening section (1^{2}–3^{5}) the bride is apparently in her home surrounded by her attendant maidens, who are probably aiding her in preparing for the coming wedding ceremony. Then she receives a visit from her plighted lover. The bride frankly expresses her love and yearnings for him and for the joys of marriage, while her attendants at times join with her. During the recital the bride recalls certain of the scenes that preceded the open plighting of her love, as, for example, in $2^{3-6,\ 8-17}$, and sings certain songs which are love poems rather than mere wedding-songs. Oriental customs give little or no opportunity for the open expression of love except on the eve of the wedding ceremony. Then the bride is not only free but is expected to express without restraint and in superlative terms the character and intensity of the love which she feels for the man who is soon to become her husband. In the East, where the parents of the bride and groom arrange all the preliminaries of the marriage, this is the Oriental equivalent of the Occidental period of courtship.

The definite wedding-songs

The song in 3^{6-11} is evidently sung by the wedding guests and proclaims the approach of the bridegroom to his bride. He is likened to Solomon and is surrounded by his male friends who, in keeping with the dramatic representation, are called mighty warriors. The song in 4^{1}–5^{1} voices the bride-

groom's praise of his bride and culminates in the public plighting of their troth. In the next scene (5^2–6^3) the bride is apparently again alone with her companions, and she describes in characteristic Oriental figures the attractions of her lover. In 6^4–8^4 the attendant guests unite with the bridegroom in describing the charms of the bride as she dances before them. This scene also concludes with a public avowal of her love. The last scene (8^{5-14}) represents the culmination of the wedding ceremony, when the bridegroom conducts his bride to his home. At the threshold of her new life she protests her love for her husband in words unsurpassed for beauty and depth of feeling. She also glories in her tested virtue and expresses her contentment with her humble lot.

Aim of the Song of Songs

The aim of the author of the Song of Songs was evidently to present a ritual to be used in the wedding ceremonies that would be both noble and chaste. Doubtless he drew his material from the love and wedding songs that had long been current among the people of Palestine. Some of them may well come from the days preceding the exile, when the memory of the glories of Solomon's kingdom and the story of Abishag the Shulammite, the fairest maiden of Israel, were still fresh in the minds of the people. Possibly the poet has preserved the songs that were actually sung at a certain wedding where he was a guest. There are personal allusions, as, for example, in 8^5, which favor this conclusion; but in general these songs are generic; that is, they are adapted to use at any peasant wedding ceremony. While they do not adequately present the sanctity and beauty inherent in our modern ideal of marriage, for that ideal was unknown to the East, they do extol nobly and exquisitely the sanctity and beauty of true love between man and woman. Nowhere in literature has this divine passion been more beautifully described than in the words which the bride addresses to her husband as she enters his home, thereby making complete the marriage relation:

Love is as strong as death;
Jealousy is as irresistible as Sheol;
Its flames are flames of fire,
A very flame of Jehovah.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can floods drown it.

Its charm and permanent value

These songs reflect the naïveté and the passion of the Eastern world and the roguishness and simplicity of the early peasant life. The simplicity of the country maiden and her contentment with her plain lot stand in strong contrast to the fulsome praise heaped upon her by her friends and attendants. The description of the charms of the bride and bridegroom are characterized by that concreteness and frankness which distinguish the Oriental poetry even of to-day from that of the Western world. The tropical luxury of the figures at times produces a jarring effect upon our Western ears, and yet in their descriptions of springtime and in their love of nature and of the simple joys of life the poems of the Song of Songs command a high place in the world's literature. While the book lacks the lofty religious

teachings that characterize many of the prophetic writings, its literary beauty, its reflection of the life and customs of the early Hebrews, and its strong and effective emphasis on the importance of pure and true love between man and woman vindicate its place among those marvellous writings which aim to deal with every phase of human experience.

V

MUSIC AND SONG IN THE TEMPLE SERVICE

Music and musical instruments among the Egyptians

THE biblical references to music and song in connection with Israel's religion are so few that they leave scores of questions unanswered. The Hebrews, however, in their art and material civilization, followed closely the example of their more advanced neighbors on the east and west. The clearest illustrations of musical instruments that come from the Jewish race are found at Rome on the Arch of Titus, which commemorates the destruction of the Jewish state; but the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian monuments contain many suggestive pictures of music and musical instruments. These are supplemented by references in the inscriptions themselves, so that through the records of these ancient peoples it is possible to gain a reasonably definite conception of the place of music among the ancient Hebrews. On a tablet of the Sumerian king Urukagina, who lived about 3200 B.C., definite provision is made for the salary of his temple singers. Far back in the old Egyptian kingdom one of the chief court officials was the director of the royal music. Music both in Babylonia and Assyria was the almost invariable accompaniment of song. In Egypt the musicians were men, who ordinarily sang as they played. They were also frequently accompanied by women, who danced as they sang. In one ancient bas-relief the women are represented as playing on castanets and tambourines. From the famous Tell-el-Amarna letters comes a picture of a harpist accompanied by seven blind singers who are clapping their hands in Oriental fashion in order to mark time. In the tomb of Ramses III, who lived about the time of the Hebrew settlement of Canaan, two Egyptian priests are represented as playing on beautifully constructed harps with ten to twelve strings. The harp appears to have been a native Egyptian instrument. The lyre—the Egyptian name of which is practically identical with the Hebrew—was evidently an importation from Asia. On one Egyptian monument a Bedouin, with unmistakable Semitic countenance, is pictured playing on a crude lyre. Another famous Egyptian picture portrays an ancient orchestra with six players, all of whom are women; a large, standing harp with thirteen strings, a lyre, a lute, a smaller harp carried over the shoulder, and a double flute can clearly be distinguished. The sixth woman is clapping her hands to beat time. A collection of ancient Sumerian and Babylonian hymns, originally intended to be used in connection with the cult at Ur, contains this suggestive addendum:

> To the temple of the god let us go with a song of petition upon a lyre,
> The psalmists shall sing,

The psalmists a chant of lordly praise shall sing,
The psalmists a chant upon a lyre shall sing.*

On an elaborate Assyrian bas-relief coming from the reign of Ashurbanipal, the great patron of art and literature, an orchestra is portrayed consisting of twenty-six performers. The instruments include seven portable harps, one dulcimer, two double flutes, and a drum. These instruments are all played by men, but the players are accompanied by four women and nine children arranged in order of size and all clapping their hands to mark time. It is interesting to note that the members of this ancient Semitic band are represented in the act of singing, for one woman is compressing her throat with her hand, as do the modern Orientals, in order to produce the shrill, high tremolo. Another slab in the British Museum pictures Semitic captives, possibly Hebrews, playing on lyres as they march in procession before an Assyrian soldier. The picture vividly recalls the statement in Psalm 137$^{1-3}$ that the Hebrew captives hung their harps on the poplars as they sat weeping beside the rivers of Babylon:

Among the Babylonians and Assyrians

For there our captors demanded of us words of song,
They who spoiled us commanded, 'Sing for us a song of Zion.'

A few references in the Old Testament suggest the character of the musical instruments in use among the Hebrews. In Judges 11^{34} it is stated that Jephthah's daughter came out with tambourines and dances to meet the warriors as they returned from their victories over the Ammonites. According to the ancient story in I Samuel 10$^{5, 10}$, Saul, after leaving Samuel, met a band of prophets with a lyre, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp. Psalm 150$^{3-5}$ contains a summary of the musical instruments later employed by the Israelites in connection with their religious services:

The different musical instruments used by the Hebrews

Praise him with the blast of the horn,
Praise him with the harp and lyre,
Praise him with the timbrel and dance,
Praise him with strings and pipe,
Praise him with sounding cymbals,
Praise him with clashing cymbals.

Six instruments are here mentioned by name. The horn, or trumpet, mentioned first, was probably one of the earliest musical instruments used by the Hebrews. It was simply the ram's horn adapted to musical use. It appears from the references to it that it was used chiefly in announcing the beginnings of the year of jubilee and the important festivals. Psalm 81$^{3, 4}$ reads:

Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
At the full moon, on our feast day;
For it is a statute for Israel,
An ordinance of the God of Jacob.

* Langdon, *Sum. and Bab. Hymns*, 70.

Trumpets were also blown by the priest to indicate the different stages in the temple service. The two trumpets pictured on the Arch of Titus at Rome are straight and long and have flaring, bell-like ends. They were probably made of metal. Several instruments of percussion were known to the Hebrews. The tambourine, or timbrel, was used in connection with the popular dances and in connection with religious music of the most joyous character. Psalm 81 begins:

> Sing aloud to God, our strength,
> Shout to the God of Jacob,
> Raise a song and sound the timbrel,
> The pleasant lyre with the harp.

Lyre and harp

As among the Egyptians and Babylonians, the lyre and harp were apparently the favorite instruments. There is no means of determining their exact Hebrew form except from the Assyrian bas-reliefs. The two harp-like instruments pictured on the late Jewish coins are vase-shaped, with three or four vertical strings extending from the base to a cross piece above which rests on supports rising on either side. The lyre and the harp were used only on joyful occasions, such as feasts and happy religious services. The harp among the Hebrews appears to have been consecrated almost entirely to worship. In I Chronicles 15^{20} there is a reference to harps set to female voices. The same musical direction is found in the superscription to Psalm 46. The implication is that the harp was pitched high and used to accompany soprano voices.

Wind instruments

Of the wind instruments, the flute is the most important. Originally it was made of reed, but later of wood bored through, as its Hebrew name indicates. There were many varieties of flutes. The more primitive had only three or four holes while the later appear to have had seven, covering the entire octave. The double flute, or Pan's pipe, was in common use among the Babylonians and Egyptians and probably among the Hebrews. The more sombre music of the flute was the common accompaniment of mourning and of the sadder and more pensive songs. There is a Jewish tradition that in the second temple there was a primitive pipe-organ provided with a leather bellows and a wind-box with ten openings. Into each of these openings a pipe with ten holes was fitted, so that it was possible to obtain from the organ one hundred distinct tones. Inasmuch as the hydraulic organ was discovered by Ctesibias about 250 B.C., it is possible that some such organ was used in the later temple.

Music and song in the pre-exilic temples

The picture of the Egyptian priests playing on harps implies that musical instruments were used by the people of the Nile in connection with their religious services. During the days of the new empire one of the chief functions of the Egyptian queen was to lead the female singers in the ritual. In Babylonia and Assyria most of the musicians appear to have been priests. The few allusions in the pre-exilic Old Testament records imply that from the earliest times both music and song played an important part in the religious life of the people. The band of prophets who were prophesying,

that is, probably giving expression to their ecstasy in song to the accompaniment of lyre, tambourine, and harp, were coming from the high place where they had evidently been worshipping. The ancient record in II Samuel 6^{14} states that *David was dancing* (probably whirling) *before Jehovah with all his might*, as he with all Israel brought the ark of Jehovah to Jerusalem with shouting and the sound of the trumpet. Elisha, according to II Kings 3^{15}, in order to prophesy, called for a minstrel, for *whenever the minstrel played the power of Jehovah came upon him.* The most significant statement is that of the prophet Amos, as he preached, probably on a festal occasion at the royal sanctuary at Bethel:

Banish from me the noise of your songs,
For to the melody of your lyres I will not listen. (5^{23}.)

Lamentations 2^7 also contains the important statement:

The foreign conquerors have made a din in Jehovah's house as in the day of solemn assembly.

Clearly, music and song were both used by the Hebrews of the pre-exilic period in connection with their temple worship, but there is no evidence that there was a special class of singers. Ezekiel, in his elaborate description of the temple officials and of the temple itself, makes no reference to them or to any special provision for this part of the ritual. It is even more significant that the detailed laws of the Pentateuch contain no references to temple singers or to their support. The natural conclusion, therefore, is that there was no special class but that the singing at the pre-exilic Hebrew sanctuaries was voluntary and that the assembled worshippers as a whole participated in it. The simple music required was probably, as in Egypt and Babylonia, supplied by the priests of each sanctuary.

Nature of the song service

Isaiah $30^{29, 32}$, although post-exilic, suggests the nature of the early song services in connection with the temple:

A song shall you have on your lips, as on a night when a feast is celebrated.
And you shall have gladness of heart like the one who sets forth with a flute
To go to the Mount of Jehovah, to the Rock of Israel.

In the traditional account of the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem in the days of David the author of I Chronicles 15^{19-24} has given a vivid picture of the musical customs in vogue at least during the Greek period when he lived: *So the singers Heman, Asaph and Ethan, were to sound aloud on cymbals of brass, while other singers played on lyres set to female voices . . . and with harps set to the octave to lead. . . . And certain other priests blew the trumpet before the ark of God.* In its poetic paraphrase of this tradition Psalm $68^{24, 25}$ completes the picture:

They have seen thy procession, O Jehovah,
The processions of my God, my King to the sanctuary;
The singers went before; behind the musicians;
In the midst maidens playing on timbrels.

In the original text preserved in I Esdras 4[62] it is stated that *the exiles who returned after their liberation by Cyrus praised the God of their fathers . . . and exulted seven days with music and rejoicing.* The fiftieth chapter of Ben Sira contains the most detailed picture of the post-exilic temple service, probably as it was observed on the day of atonement:

Then shouted the sons of Aaron,
They blew on the trumpets of beaten work,
They blew and sent forth a mighty blast,
As a remembrance before the Most High.
Then all the people together hasted,
They fell down with their faces to the ground,
To worship their Lord, the Almighty God, Most High.
The singers also praised him with their voices;
In the whole house was there made sweet melody. ([15-18].)

The music of the second temple

From these vivid descriptions and from the nature of the instruments used in connection with the Hebrew worship it is possible to draw certain definite inferences regarding the character of the music used in the services of the second temple. The music employed by the Jews to-day throws little light on the problem, for it has preserved few, if any, of the old melodies. The instruments employed and the musical terms used in the psalms indicate that Hebrew music was strident and noisy. Harmony in our modern sense was apparently unknown, even as it is to the Turks and Persians and Arabs to-day. This does not mean that Hebrew music was necessarily dissonant. A modern Arab chorus almost always sings in unison. The melody is not appreciated by an Occidental because it is rhythmical rather than harmonious. II Chronicles 5[13] contains the suggestive statement: *Both the trumpeters and the singers were as one, making one sound to praise Jehovah.* This probably means that the trumpeters all played together on the same note during the pauses, while the voices sang the air in unison. The superscriptions to a few of the psalms suggest that the melody was sometimes reduplicated in octaves. As a matter of fact, the octave was known at a very early period. The religious scale was probably diatonic, each song being sung on one prevailing key. The pauses were determined by the sense of the passage. Unlike our modern chants, interpretation of the ideas was the chief end sought and the melody was entirely secondary. The monotony was still further relieved by the introduction of antiphonal or alternating choruses. Unfortunately, the directions regarding the change of speakers or choruses, if they ever existed, have been lost, so that it is necessary to infer from the contents of the psalms themselves how the different parts were intended to be rendered. Like the weird, fascinating music which is still used by certain Mohammedan sects in connection with their religious services, the music and songs of the ancient Hebrews undoubtedly made a powerful emotional impression upon the worshippers. Unlike some of our complicated modern music, it never concealed but ever aided in revealing the thoughts and feelings which it was intended to inter-

pret, and thus served to establish the sense of a close, intimate relation between the worshippers and their God.

History of the temple singers

The prominence given to the temple singers by later Judaism is an index of the popular appreciation of the important place held by music and song in the ritual. The history of the temple singers is enveloped in much obscurity. The chief sources of information are (1) the superscriptions to the psalms, (2) the testimony of the author of Chronicles, who was himself a temple singer and intensely interested in this class, and (3) the data found in the later Jewish writings. One of the older groups of songs in the Psalter (42–49) is dedicated to the sons of Korah. These were apparently a guild of temple singers, called the *sons of Korah*, even as the early Hebrew priests were called the *sons of Levi* and the prophetic guilds the *sons of the prophets*. Another group of psalms, apparently coming from a little later period, are similarly dedicated to the sons of Asaph. Two later psalms (88, 89) are associated with the names of Heman and Ethan. The implication, therefore, of these superscriptions is that the oldest group of singers bore the name *sons of Korah* and that the other guilds came into existence, or at least into prominence, at later periods. This conclusion is in general confirmed by the writings of the Chronicler. In his version of the census of the Judean community, found in Ezra 2^{41} and the parallel passage in Nehemiah 7^{44} and also in Nehemiah 11^{22}, the temple singers are known simply as the *sons of Asaph*. These lists apparently represent conditions in the Judean community during the latter part of the Persian and the earlier part of the Greek periods. There is no evidence that the temple singers were originally drawn from the ranks of the Levites. Their membership in the musical guilds probably depended upon their inclinations and ability. In Nehemiah 10^{28} they are ranked side by side with the porters and temple servants.

Fortunes of the sons of Korah

In the days of the Chronicler, however (*circa* 250 B.C.), the older guild of the sons of Korah had apparently disappeared and are represented simply by the sub-guild of Heman. This is directly implied by the Chronicler in I Chronicles 6^{33-37}, where he makes Heman a descendant of Korah. It is also confirmed by the superscription to Psalm 88, which is classified as a psalm of the sons of Korah; but in the latter part of the superscription it is also designated as a Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite. Why the sons of Korah lost their prestige must remain a question of conjecture. According to I Chronicles 9^{19} and $26^{1, 19}$ and elsewhere in the writings of the Chronicler the Korahites were simply doorkeepers and guardians of the temple. Possibly the late priestly story in Numbers 16 regarding the rebellion of the Korahites and of the signal judgment that overtook them is the late traditional record of a rebellion of this guild of temple singers against the regular priests. These were designated in post-exilic days as the *sons of Aaron*, that is, the guild of priests that guarded the ark (Hebrew אֲרוֹן *ark*). In II Chronicles 20^{19}, however, the Chronicler speaks of the Korahites as singers, but he assigns their activity to an early period in Israel's history, thus confirming the conclusions already drawn: *In the days of Jehoshaphat the Levites of the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites stood up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.*

Position of the temple singers during the Persian and Greek periods

The Chronicler also identifies the three guilds of temple singers of his day with the Levites and in his characteristic way traces their appointment to the days of David. Thus I Chronicles 15[16, 17] reads: *David also commanded the chief of the Levites to appoint their kinsmen the singers with instruments of music, lyres, harps, and cymbals, who should raise shouts of rejoicing. So the Levites appointed Heman, the son of Joel; and of his kinsmen Asaph, the son of Berechia and of the sons of Merari, their kinsman, Ethan, the son of Kushaiah.* These data indicate rather clearly the history of the temple singers during the Persian and Greek periods. The absence of any reference to them in contemporary writings and in the Pentateuch imply that they did not become prominent until the latter part of the Persian period after Nehemiah had restored the walls of Jerusalem and the priestly law associated with Ezra had been instituted. Their growing prominence was one of the results of the emphasis which the late priestly law and the leaders of the Judean community placed upon the temple and its ritual. It is contemporaneous with the growth of the Psalter and the increasing importance of the song service. The guild of the Korahites appears to have flourished during the middle and latter part of the Persian period and to have been originally distinct from the priests and Levites. Before the close of the Persian period the sons of Asaph succeeded, in part, at least, to the position and prestige at first held by the sons of Korah. Possibly the sons of Asaph, as the Chronicler states, were enlisted from the Levites. Their non-Levitical origin may explain why the sons of Korah were gradually set aside, so that by the days of the Chronicler they had no part in the song service of the temple. At least it is certain that by the middle of the Greek period the three contemporary guilds of singers known as the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Ethan or Jeduthun (I Chr. 25[1, 6]) were classified as Levites and were in charge of the song service of the temple. The presence of three guilds also indicates the growing numbers and importance of this class of temple servants. In I Chronicles 24[1-19] and 25 the Chronicler states that, like the priests, they had become so numerous that they were divided into twenty-four courses and that each course ministered in turn at the temple while the others returned to their homes and turned their attention to other occupations. The rapidly increasing importance of music and of the singer class illustrates forcibly the growing emphasis which later Judaism placed upon the ritual and upon the expression of religion in public worship. The next step in Jewish thought was by analogy to transfer this elaborate system of song service from earth to heaven and to think of God himself as surrounded by choirs of angelic singers ever chanting his praises. Thus the dominant ritualistic tendency of later Judaism transformed and reshaped human beliefs regarding the ways in which God should be served not only on earth but also in the life beyond death.

VI

THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PSALTER

MODERN discovery and research have demonstrated that at least two millenniums of intense human struggle and earnest religious thought lie back of the Hebrew Psalter. Centuries before the days of Moses and David the ancient Sumerians, Egyptians, and Babylonians developed a hymnology that in volume and literary form, if not in spirit and content, was startlingly like that of the Hebrews. In one ancient inscription the titles of over one hundred Sumerian and Babylonian hymns are given. These ancient hymns for public service were classified according to the musical instruments that were to be used with them. Some were to be sung with the flute, some with the lyre, and others probably with the bagpipe. The poetic structure of these ancient hymns is also clearly indicated on the clay inscriptions. As in modern poetry, each succeeding line begins anew at the left of the page. Where longer metres are employed, the pause in the middle of each line is also marked. The old Sumerian hymnology

A few of the older Sumerian hymns strike noble chords. The most significant are the hymns and prayers addressed to Enlil, the old god of Nippur. One opens with the significant words: Hymns to Enlil

O Enlil, counsellor, doth any one comprehend thy form?
The strength-begifted lord of the harvest lands,
Created in the mountains, lord of the grain-fields,
Warrior who possesseth great strength, father Enlil,
Thou art the powerful prince of the gods,
For creating posterity thou sustainest life,
As the air, thou art all-pervading.

Another psalm which is really a lament addressed to Enlil begins:

O honored one, relent, behold thy city!
O exalted and honored one, relent, behold thy city!
O lord of the lands, relent, behold thy city!
O lord of unerring word, relent, behold thy city.
Enlil, father of Sumer, relent, behold thy city!
. . . .

The little ones perish, the great ones perish,
Her booty the dogs defile,

Her pillage the rude foe defiles,
In her banqueting hall the wind revels.

Amen-hotep IV's hymn to Aton

A large number of hymns sung to the gods have come down from the beginnings of Egyptian history. The crowning product of this wide-spread tendency to worship the gods with song and musical accompaniment is the famous hymn in praise of Aton by the great reforming king Amenhotep IV. It opens with the majestic passage:

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,
O living Aton, beginning of life!
When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;
For thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all thou hast made.
Thou art Re, and thou hast carried them all away captive,
Thou bindest them by thy love.
Though thou art afar, thy rays are on earth,
Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.

The hymn then goes on to describe night and darkness and the god's care for men and animals in language strikingly parallel to that of Psalm 104. (Cf. § 95.) After picturing the creation of man and the animals the poem continues:

How manifold are thy works!
They are hidden from before us,
O thou sole god, whose powers no other possesseth,
Thou didst create the earth according to thy desire,
While thou wast alone:
Men, all cattle large and small,
All that are upon the earth,
That go about upon their feet;
All that are on high,
That fly with their wings.

The poem concludes with an ardent prayer by the king in his own behalf:

Thou art in my heart,
There is no other that knoweth thee,
Save thy son Ikhnaton;
Thou hast made him wise in thy designs,
And in thy might.*

Most of the Egyptian hymns are trivial and repetitious. After the remarkable burst of reforming activity under Amenhotep IV, little religious

* Breasted, *Hist. of Egypt*, 371–5.

Influence of the Egyptian hymns upon the Psalter

progress is discernible. The later poems become mere repetitions of the ancient hymns or else tiresome liturgies. As in art and literature, so in the praise of the gods, the Egyptians reached their zenith long before the beginnings of Israel's history. It is not improbable that the prominence given to the song service of the Egyptians exerted a certain influence on the Jewish worshippers at the Yahu temple, which stood for generations in the city of Elephantine, only a few yards away from a famous Egyptian shrine. In the sacred city of Memphis and in other great cities of Egypt there were ample opportunities for the Egyptians to exert at least an indirect influence upon the imitative Jews of the dispersion. With the possible exception, however, of the one hundred and fourth Psalm, it is impossible to trace a direct transference of Egyptian thought to the Jewish Psalter. The incontestable superiority of the Hebrew psalms to those which come from the land of the Nile speak conclusively against such a transfer.

Babylonian and Assyrian hymns

The history of the development of Babylonian and Assyrian hymnology is in many ways closely parallel to that among the Egyptians: the older hymns are the nobler; the later are little more than repetitions or slavish imitations of the older models. The same hymns were sung as late as 200 B.C. in practically the same form as in the days of Hammurabi, who lived nearly two thousand years earlier. Of these ancient psalms the hymns to Shamash, the sun-god, are the noblest. In one he is addressed as follows:

The law of mankind dost thou direct,
Eternally just in the heavens art thou,
Of faithful judgment towards all the world art thou;
Thou knowest what is right, thou knowest what is wrong.

. . . .

O Shamash! Supreme judge, great lord of all the world art thou!
Lord of creation, merciful one of the world art thou!
O Shamash! on this day purify and cleanse the king, the son of his god;
Whatever is evil within him, let it be taken out.

Elsewhere the chief god of Babylon is thus addressed:

Powerful Marduk, whose anger is a destroying flood,
Who reconciled is like a merciful father,
I am oppressed by prayers without reply;
Wails unheard depress me.

Sometimes these psalms or petitions are in dialogue form: first the priest presents the cause of the petitioner and then the petitioner himself speaks. In all of them there is much repetition, which reveals their liturgical purpose. They also contain references to their use in connection with the great feasts, as, for example, that of the New Year. Upon the Jewish exiles living in Babylon these elaborate services must have made a profound impression and must have emphasized the tendency, already strong, to develop this

form of the ritual in connection with the second temple. Occasional echoes of the ancient Sumerian and Babylonian hymns may be traced in the Hebrew Psalter, but for the most part the older hymnology is cold and barren compared with the fervent songs later sung by the worshippers of Jehovah.

Psalms in the pre-exilic Hebrew temple

Distinct references, like that in Amos 5^{23}, to the songs sung in the temple at Bethel, and, in Lamentations 2^{7}, to the din on the day of solemn assembly, leave little doubt that the Hebrews, even before the exile, chanted songs at their sanctuaries on the great feast-days. In certain of the pre-exilic prophetic books, as, for example, Jeremiah 9^{17-22} and 12^{7-12}, are found lyrical poems which in form and content closely resemble many of the individual psalms found in the first part of the Psalter. Concerning the nature of the psalms sung in connection with pre-exilic temples there is no clear evidence. Amos appears to have regarded them with disfavor. Whether or not any of them are still preserved in the Psalter must be determined from a detailed study of the individual psalms.

Different types of psalms

The superscriptions of the individual psalms contain certain suggestions regarding the history of Old Testament hymnology. The oldest Hebrew designation of a lyric poem (*shîr*) is usually translated *song*. It is used to describe the joyous songs in Genesis 31^{27}, Isaiah 5^{1}, 30^{29}, the triumphal ode chanted by the Hebrew women after the great victory under the leadership of Deborah and Barak (Judg. 5^{12}), and the love-songs in the Song of Songs. It also describes the songs sung at drunken revels (Is. 24^{9}). In every case it is the designation of joyous songs sung probably with musical accompaniments. This meaning is also implied by the Greek equivalent *psalmos* (from which comes the English word *psalm*), which means a song sung to the accompaniment of a harp or some stringed instrument. This title is borne by a group of psalms which appear to be among the oldest in the Psalter. As the title implies, they are especially adapted to liturgical use. Seven psalms bear the title *Miktam*, which probably means *chosen*. All of them are ascribed to David and most of them are relatively early. Their noble style and strong emotion confirm the popular interpretation of this term. Fifty-seven psalms bear the title *Mizmor*. The derivation of this term is not certain, but it probably means *prime*, that is, psalms selected for use, possibly, in the synagogue. Thirteen psalms bear the title *Maskil*, which comes from the common Hebrew verb meaning *to ponder, to meditate*. The contents of these meditations indicate that most of them come from the circle of the wise. Their contents also suggest that they are comparatively late. These different titles clearly indicate that the Psalter consists of collections of psalms which come from different periods and from different groups of writers.

The Davidic titles

A second group of superscriptions represents the later traditions regarding the authorship of individual psalms or gives the names of famous characters in Israel's history to which they were ascribed. Seventy-four psalms in the Hebrew Bible bear the title *To David*. In the Greek version many other psalms are ascribed to Israel's early poet king. The meaning of this title has been differently interpreted. It is exceedingly doubtful if the Hebrew preposition *to* was ever used before the exile to designate authorship. In

Isaiah 38[9], which is probably post-exilic, it is used to describe a poem attributed to Hezekiah. From the beginning of the exile the use of this term to indicate possession became increasingly prominent. The Sidonian coins bear a similar inscription: *To the Sidonians*. The closest analogy to the title *To David* is the inscription, *To the Sons of Korah*, borne by Psalms 42–49, or the title *To Asaph* (*e. g.*, Ps. 50). Clearly this title does not mean that these psalms were written by members of these guilds of singers but rather that they were either dedicated to them or written for their use. Hence the title *To David* must mean either a psalm dedicated to David or else one of a collection of songs made by a guild of singers who bore the historic designation David. The contents of these seventy-four so-called Davidic psalms leaves no doubt that the majority, if not all of them, were written long after the days of David. This fact lends probability to the conclusion that the title *Psalm to David*, like the corresponding terms *Proverbs of Solomon* and *Law of Moses*, was used to designate an early literary production the exact authorship of which was unknown, but which was by current tradition attributed to the traditional patron of this type of literature.

The tendency to attribute all psalms to David

That the tendency in time became strong to attribute all lyric poetry to David is confirmed not only by the title but also by the epilogue to Psalm 72: *The Prayers of Jesse the Son of David are ended*. The same tendency gave rise to the third type of superscription which connects individual psalms with incidents in the life of the great king. Thirteen such superscriptions are found. These historical notes are based on the narratives in I and II Samuel after these books had received their final Deuteronomic redaction. They cannot, therefore, be earlier than the exile. It is possible that they were added by the editor who collected the so-called Davidic collection of psalms. They are scattered throughout the Psalter, beginning with the third psalm and concluding with Psalm 142.

Musical directions

A third type of superscription consists of the musical directions attached to certain psalms. Most of them are found in connection with the psalms inscribed to the musical director, and they were clearly intended to facilitate the use of the psalms in the synagogue or temple service. Of these musical directions there are two types: (1) those designating the voice and (2) those indicating the tone or melody. Under the first class several, as in I Chronicles 15[20], bear the title *For maidens*, that is, for soprano or falsetto voices. Two others (6, 12) have a musical direction that recurs in I Chronicles 15[21]. It probably means *on the octave*, or *the lower octave*. The designations of tone or melody apparently consist of the opening word or words of a popular song introduced by the phrase *in accordance with*. Thus, Psalm 56 was to be sung to the same tune as the popular song, *The Silent Dove of Them Who Are Afar Off*. The superscription to Psalms 45, 69, and 80 is probably to be translated, *My Testimony is a Beautiful Anemone*. The melody of Psalm 22 bears the picturesque title *Hind of the Dawn*. The difficulties which later translators found in interpreting these superscriptions is shown by the wide variations in the renderings. In the light of the Greek and Syriac, the superscriptions of Psalms 8, 81, and 84 should

probably be rendered, *For the Wind Presses*, but this is rendered by the Targum, *The Harp which David Brought to Gath.*

The immediate historical background of the Psalter

The final proofs regarding the date of individual psalms and, therefore, of the growth of the Psalter are the literary characteristics, the historical allusions, and the spirit and thought of each psalm; but the analogies in the development of hymnology in other religions, the occasional references in the Hebrew writings outside the Psalter, and the testimony of the superscriptions indicate beyond doubt that the growth of Israel's lyric literature was gradual and culminated in the four centuries following the destruction of Jerusalem. The immediate historical background of the majority of the psalms was clearly a period of crisis and persecution. Like the earliest Christian hymns, they were cast in the furnace of affliction. Recent discovery and biblical research have given us a new and increasingly definite knowledge of the four centuries and a half that followed the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. For the faithful Jew it was a period of intense and protracted agony relieved only by a few brief intervals of peace and prosperity. The sack of their temple and capital city, the flight of many refugees to Egypt, and the deportation of their political and spiritual leaders to Babylonia left the Jewish people dismembered and crushed. In the words of the author of Lamentations 4[14, 15]:

> They wandered as blind men through the streets, polluted with blood;
> That men might not touch them they drew aside their garments:
> 'Unclean!' they cried to them, 'Depart, do not touch.'

Sadly he wails:

> Our eyes still fail in looking, for help that is unavailing,
> In our watching we have watched in vain for a nation that does not help.

Hopes that centred about the rebuilding of the temple

The Jews, however, through the ages have always proved a race of optimists. Even the disaster of 586 B.C. could not crush them. Gradually their hope kindled and centred in the survivors of the house of David. Refugees came back to build their hovels on the ruins of Jerusalem and a simple ritual was instituted on the desecrated temple site. The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus in 538 B.C. brought to the Jews of Palestine religious liberty and possibly inspired a handful of the exiles to come back from distant Babylonia. In 520 Haggai and Zechariah fired the zeal of the poverty-stricken remnant that remained in Palestine to rebuild the ruined walls of the ancient temple and to revive the sacrifices. The news of the mighty revolutions that shook the Persian Empire at the beginning of the reign of Darius led the temple builders to hope, though in vain, for the restoration of their former independence and glory under the rule of their governor, Zerubbabel, the surviving representative of the house of David. It was one of the rare moments in post-exilic history when Israel's earlier messianic hopes burst into a flame; but that flame was quickly extinguished when the rule of Darius was firmly established throughout the Persian

Empire. Zerubbabel was probably banished or put to death. The high priest under a Persian governor became henceforth the civil as well as the religious head of the Jewish people.

The seventy years of distress

The seventy years which followed were among the darkest and most discouraging in all of Israel's history. They are recorded not in the annals but in the lyrics of the Old Testament. When Nehemiah came to Palestine in 445 B.C. he found the Jewish community the helpless victim of the pitiless attacks of its heathen neighbors. Worse still, he found the mass of the people robbed of their hereditary estates and enslaved by their heartless rulers. It was a period when fidelity to Jehovah and to his demands was rewarded by poverty and persecution and the taunts of those who, like Job's friends, held to the old dogma that misfortune and suffering were the inevitable proofs of sin and divine displeasure. It is probable that out of this period of anguish come the two noblest products of Israel's immortal genius, the book of Job and the rhapsodies of Isaiah 40–55. Faith, which, though crushed to earth, rose to heaven, was invincible. Apparently, it was the II Isaiah's peerless ideal of the suffering servant of Jehovah that kindled the zeal of the youthful Nehemiah in distant Susa and thus set in motion forces which not only resulted in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem but also in the transformation of the ideals and life of Judaism.

Closing years of the Persian period

The period which followed the work of Nehemiah was one of prosperity and confidence and exultation for the Jews of Palestine. It is clearly the background of many of the most beautiful psalms in the Psalter. Through the dark, gloomy valley Jehovah had led his people forth unharmed, and now as their divine host set before them a rich table in the presence of their enemies. During the closing years of the Persian period the avenging armies of the bloody Artaxerxes Ochus traversed Palestine. How far they afflicted the Jews and left their mark upon the Psalter is not entirely clear. At about the same time the feud between Jew and Samaritan began to distort and embitter the spirit of these two kindred yet alien peoples.

The Greek period

The conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C., did not materially affect the fortunes of the Judean community but it greatly broadened their intellectual horizon. Many Jews followed in the wake of Alexander's conquests or else were attracted to the great cities of the eastern Mediterranean, and especially to Egypt, by the unusual opportunities offered them for commerce and trade. Flourishing Greek colonies on the borders of Syria and in Palestine itself brought the Jews into close contact with the alluring life and culture of Greece. The psalms of the Greek period show the influence of this broader outlook which came through contact with Greek thought and civilization. Joel, who lived during the latter part of the Persian period, is the last Old Testament prophet whose name we know. Henceforth the wise men, or sages, filled the place formerly occupied by the prophets. Unlike the earlier prophets who spoke to the nation, they addressed their teachings to the individual. Recognizing the great value of the lyric as a form of teaching, they presented the results of their thought and experience not only in proverbs but in psalms. Like the prophets and priests, they made a profound impression upon the Psalter.

The Maccabean struggle

During the century and a half following the death of Alexander the Jews of Palestine were in turn courted or conquered by the Ptolemies of Egypt or by the Seleucid rulers of Syria. Finally, about 200 B.C., they came under the permanent control of Syria. During the next half century Greek ideas and culture made alarming inroads upon Judaism. At last the reigning high priests themselves became ardent Hellenists. Finally, however, the bitter persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes aroused the slumbering loyalty of the Jewish race. The blood of its martyrs fired the zeal of the aged priest Mattathias and his brave sons, and Israel entered upon its second great, heroic age. The valiant deeds of Saul and David were repeatedly eclipsed on hard-fought battle-fields. The faith and swords of Judas and his followers ultimately won not only religious freedom but also political independence.

Conclusions

The three great crises that have left their indelible stamp upon the Psalter are (1) the destruction of Jerusalem in 586, (2) the seventy years of discouragement and petty persecution which followed the disillusionment of those who rebuilt the second temple, and (3) the bitter Maccabean struggle. The brighter, more joyous periods were (1) the few short years between 520 and 516 B.C. when the temple was being rebuilt, (2) the period of hopefulness and rejoicing following the work of Nehemiah in 445, (3) the comparatively calm though less joyous Greek period, and (4) the confident, exultant, warlike age inaugurated by the brilliant victories of Judas Maccabeus.

VII

THE STRUCTURE AND HISTORY OF THE PSALTER

The five great divisions of the Psalter

THE Psalter in its present form is divided into five divisions or books. These are 1–41, 42–72, 73–89, 90–106, and 107–150. Each of these divisions is marked by a concluding doxology. Psalm 150 in itself constitutes the closing doxology. The first three divisions are natural and apparently mark successive stages in the early growth of the Psalter. The division between 106 and 107 is arbitrary, for Psalms 104–107 are in theme a literary unit. This fivefold division is the work either of the final editor of the Psalter or else of some later reviser. Its aim was probably to divide the Psalter into five divisions corresponding to the five books of the law. It emphasizes, however, the fact that the Psalter is made up of smaller collections and that, like the book of Proverbs, it grew gradually as the result of bringing different collections together. Chapter 1, which constitutes a general introduction, like the introduction to the book of Proverbs (1–9), is probably one of the latest additions to the book. Its didactic character reflects the thought of the later wise and of their successors the scribes.

The two Davidic collections

The oldest collection of psalms in the Psalter is clearly the so-called first Davidic collection found in 2–41. Psalm 10, which lacks the title *To David*, was once the second half of an acrostic of which the first is found in 9. The title of Psalm 33 is also lacking except in the Greek version. Its contents indicate that it was later inserted in this earlier collection. Another Davidic collection is found in 51–72. At the close of this collection is found the significant note, following an elaborate doxology: *The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.* This postscript lends force to the suggestion, made long ago by Ewald, that the first Davidic collection was once followed immediately by the second contained in 51–72. If this reconstruction be adopted it also solves another problem, for at present Psalm 50, which is dedicated to Asaph, is separated from the other Asaph psalms in 73–83 by the second Davidic collection (51–72). This restoration brings together the two great collections of psalms attributed to the temple singers, the sons of Korah and the sons of Asaph. The general character and contents of the second Davidic collection confirms the conclusion that they come from the same general point of view and from a little later period than those in the first collection.

Their date

The evidence is reasonably convincing that the majority of the sixty-two psalms in these Davidic collections (2–41, 51–72) were written during the first half of the Persian period or earlier and that the first collection was made soon after the work of Nehemiah and the priestly reforms associated

with Ezra. The literary style of these psalms is vigorous and free from the Aramaisms and artificialities which characterize many of the psalms in the latter part of the Psalter. They contain few liturgical formulas and most of them are written from the individual or class point of view. In general they reflect the events following the Babylonian exile and the life of a poor, struggling community surrounded by merciless oppressors. The teachings of the pre-exilic prophets, and especially Jeremiah (*e. g.*, Ps. 16 and 39), have made a profound impression upon the minds of the psalmists. The chief problems are those of Lamentations and of Isaiah 40–66, with which writings these psalms have many points of contact. They reveal the sufferings and the hopes of the afflicted during the days preceding the appearance of Nehemiah as well as the confidence and optimism that burst out after his advent. The editor or editors who collected them were probably inspired to do so by the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, the revival of the Judean community, and the extension of the temple service which resulted from the work of that great Jewish layman. The fact that Psalm 14 is reproduced in 53 and 31^{1-3} in 71^{1-3} suggests that the second collection, 51–72, was made independently and a little later, possibly near the close of the Persian or early in the Greek period.

The Korahite psalms

Psalms 42–49 bear the superscription, *To the Sons of Korah*. Inasmuch as these were the chief guild of singers at the Jerusalem temple during the middle and latter part of the Persian period, and were later supplanted by the guilds of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, it is probable that the collection of Korahite psalms comes from the same period. This dating is confirmed by their contents. The problem of innocent suffering still rests heavily upon the psalmists, but the earlier sense of guilt is lacking, even as in the contemporary prophecy of Joel. The literary style is vigorous and highly poetic. The liturgical form as well as the title of these psalms indicates that most of them were written for use in the temple service. The eight Korahite psalms (42–49) were probably added to the earlier Davidic collections about the beginning of the Greek period.

The psalms of the sons of Korah

In the second half of the Psalter the indications of historical growth are indistinct. The titles point to the work of a final editor who combined many smaller collections. The third general division opens with a collection of eleven psalms, 73–83, to which should be added Psalm 50, which in the process of editorial revision had been separated from them. These are all dedicated to the sons of Asaph, who, we may infer from the references in Chronicles, came into prominence about 250 B.C. In this collection are found certain psalms, as, for example, 74, 79, and 83, which clearly voice the feelings of the Jews while they were being ground down under the cruel heel of Antiochus Epiphanes (167–164 B.C.).

The Hallel psalms

Scattered through the latter part of the Psalter are two groups of so-called Hallel psalms (104–118 and 136–150), each of which is introduced by the superscription *Hallelujah*, which may be interpreted: *Give praise to Yah.* Their contents as well as their title indicate that they were written for liturgical use. Psalms 104–107 are in reality one psalm describing Jehovah's rulership of the world and leadership of his people. Psalm 104 de-

scribes the creation, 105 the exodus, 106 Israel's early history, and 107 the later restoration. Psalms 111 and 112 constitute an acrostic. In the later Jewish ritual Psalms 113 and 114 were chanted before the Passover meal and 115–118 at its close. In the great Hallel psalm, 136, the same refrain is repeated twenty-six times. Psalms 146–149, like 150, are in reality long doxologies adapted to use in the synagogue and temple service. These Hallel psalms probably come from the latter part of the Greek and the first part of the Maccabean periods. Several of them are quoted by the Chronicler, indicating that they were probably in existence as early as 250 B.C. although they may not then have been incorporated in the Psalter.

The psalms of ascent

Psalms 120–134 are a group of songs of ascent or pilgrim psalms. With the exception of Psalm 126, they are all written in the same five-beat measure. They are characterized by original and bold figures of speech and by an intense love for Jerusalem and the temple. As a rule, their spirit is joyous and hopeful. The didactic note is strong and their point of view is in general that of the Pharisees. They probably antedate the fierce Maccabean struggle and come from the latter part of the Greek period. As their title implies, they voice the feelings of the pilgrims as they resorted to the temple at their annual feasts.

The completion of the Psalter

Even as the revival of the Palestinian community, following the work of Nehemiah, inspired the first collection of psalms (2–41), so the Maccabean victories and the restoration of the temple service appear to have furnished the incentive to make new collections of psalms and to complete the canon of the Psalter. This concluding work was in all probability done during the peaceful, prosperous reign of Simon (143–135 B.C.). Contemporary records indicate that it was an age in which many new psalms were written and when great attention was given to the development of the temple ritual. This tendency was encouraged by the aged Simon, as is stated in I Maccabees 14[12, 14, 15]:

He made peace in the land,
And Israel rejoiced with great joy.
Everyone sat under his own vine and fig tree,
And there was no one to make them afraid.
He was full of zeal for the law,
And every lawless and wicked person he banished.
He made the sanctuary glorious,
And multiplied the vessels of the temple.

He probably also multiplied the temple singers and elaborated the song service. Israel had good cause to *sing to Jehovah a new song*, for he had *crowned the afflicted with victory*. The Psalter closes with their song of thanksgiving:

Let the faithful exult in glory,
Let them sing for joy on their beds.
Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,

And a two-edged sword in their hand,
To execute vengeance upon the heathen,
And punishment on the peoples,
To bind their kings with chains,
Their nobles with fetters of iron,
To execute on them the judgment written;
It is an honor for all his faithful ones. (Ps. 149^{5-9}.)

Thus the evidence is conclusive that the Psalter has a history as long and complex as the Old Testament itself. Certain of its older poems may come from the days of David, about 1000 B.C. Its later psalms breathe the war-like spirit of the Maccabean age. It represents the growth of at least eight centuries and the work of fully one hundred poets. Back of it lie two millenniums of Semitic religious history; but the psalms themselves, with few exceptions, come from the four centuries and a half that began with the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. They record the inspired insight, the dauntless courage, and the profound spiritual experiences of the noble souls who faced the cruel persecutions and the great crises of the Persian, Greek, and Maccabean periods. Born in stress and struggle, they have a unique message and meaning for all who are in the stream of life.

TRIBAL AND NATIONAL SONGS

I. TRIUMPHAL ODES

Gen. $4^{23b, 24}$, Ex. 15^{1b-18}, Judg. 5^{2-31}, I Sam. 18^{7}

II. TRADITIONAL ORACLES

Gen. 3^{14b-19}, 9^{25b-27}, $12^{2, 3}$, 49^{2-27}, Dt. 33, Nu. $24^{3b-9, 15b-19}$, $23^{7b-10, 18b-22, 24}$, II Sam. 7^{10-16}, 23^{1-7}

TRIBAL AND NATIONAL SONGS

I

TRIUMPHAL ODES

Gen. $4^{23b, 24}$, Ex. 15^{1b-18}, Judg. 5^{2-31}, I Sam. 18^{7}

§ 1. Lamech's Song of Vengeance, Gen. $4^{23b, 24}$

Gen. 4 23b Adah and Zillah, hearken to my voice
Wives of Lamech, give ear to my speech:
A man I slay for wounding me,
Yea, a youth for bruising me.
24 If Cain be avenged seven-fold,
Lamech shall be seventy and seven!

Every injury to be fully avenged

§ 2. Jehovah's Deliverance and Leadership of His People, Ex. 15^{1b-18}

Ex. 15 1b I will sing[a] to Jehovah for he is greatly exalted;
Horse and his rider hath he hurled into the sea.

Introduction

Triumphal Odes.—Of all the varied sentiments which gave rise to lyric poetry among the ancient Hebrews, that of exultation over some warlike achievement was probably the first to find expression in song. Each important victory was apparently commemorated by a triumphal ode. Most of these ancient songs appear to have been composed at the time when the events which they record transpired, and to have been first sung by the women, as the Hebrew warriors came back laden with the spoils of victory. Cf. Ex. 15^{21} and §§ 3 and 4. From Ex. 15^{21} and I Sam. 18^{7} it is evident that they were accompanied with joyful music and dance. Many of them, like the majestic triumphal ode in Judg. 5, were probably preserved on the lips of the people and possibly sung by the warriors as they later went out to battle. Some, as, for example, the ode commemorating the victory over the Moabites, Nu. 21^{27}, were treasured and recited on festal occasions by the bards or professional singers. In later times some, and possibly all, of them were collected and embodied in one of Israel's great song-books, the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah* or the *Book of the Righteous One*. Cf. Introd., p. 12.

Undoubtedly, the early Israelites possessed many more of these triumphal songs than have been preserved in the O.T. Those which we now have were quoted incidentally by the early prophetic historians, who evidently depended largely upon these and similar songs for the data which they have incorporated in their prose histories. The quotations suffice, however, to give an idea of the simplicity, freshness, variety, and rare dramatic power of these ancient songs. They also reveal clearly the aspirations and spirit and faith of the early Hebrews. No later historian acts as interpreter; but instead the primitive Israelite through them sets forth his innermost feelings and motives.

§ 1 In this very ancient fragment, perhaps the oldest in the O.T., the spirit of revenge, which the early man shares with the child, is forcibly expressed. It likewise voices the principle of blood vengeance underlying the ancient law of *an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*, which is the basis of many regulations in the Code of Hammurabi as well as in the O.T. codes. Cf. Vol. IV, p. 117. It is also the dominant law of the Arab to-day.

The original occasion of this so-called *Song of Lamech* was probably a successful act of retaliation against an offending clan or tribe. The Cain alluded to in the song is evidently not the one mentioned in the much later and more familiar story of Cain and Abel in the same chapter, cf. Vol. I, § 6, but possibly the ancient hero of the genealogical list, 4^{17}, who built the city of Enoch (Uruk) and who performed an act recorded in a tradition which has been lost. The first two lines are in the four-beat and the last four in the characteristic three-beat measure. For the setting of the poem, cf. Vol. I, § 4.

§ 2 In beauty of diction, vigor of movement, and variety of figure this poem ranks as one of the noblest in the O.T. Its spirit of praise and adoration connects it closely with the oldest pas.

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[a] 15^{1b} Gk., Syr., and Targ., *Let us sing*.

Praise to Jehovah for the great deliverance

2 Jehovah is my strength and my[b] song,
For to me hath he brought deliverance.[c]
This is my God, him I praise,
My fathers' God, him I extol.

His overthrow of the Egyptians

3 Jehovah is indeed a warrior, Jehovah is his name:[d]
4 The chariots of Pharaoh and his host hath he cast into the sea,
And the best of his captains were plunged into the Sea of Reeds,
5 The deeps cover them, they go down to the depths like a stone!

Jehovah's omnipotent might

6 Thy right hand, O Jehovah, is glorious in power,
Thy right hand, O Jehovah, shattereth the foe.
7 By the wealth of thy might thou rendest thine opponents;
Thou sendest forth thy wrath, it consumeth them like stubble.

His miraculous destruction of the proud Egyptians

8 By the blast of thy nostrils were the waters heaped up,
The surging waters stood upright as a stack,[e]
The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.
9 The foe said, 'I will pursue, yea, I will overtake,
I will divide spoil, on them shall my desire be satisfied,

---

in the Psalter, and yet the note of triumph and exultation that runs through it justifies its classification with the still older triumphal odes. Its main theme is the deliverance from the Egyptians at the Red Sea. To this event the first half of the poem is devoted, but the remainder, $^{11-17}$, traces rapidly the experiences of the Hebrews in the wilderness, east of the Jordan, in the conquest of Canaan to the building of Solomon's temple and even to the days of Josiah and the rule of the Deuteronomic law, when Jerusalem came to be regarded as the place which Jehovah alone had chosen as his abode, ^{17}. The point of view of at least the latter part of the song is the period after the Babylonian exile had cast its deep pall upon the Israelitish race, for in ^{17} there is an implied hope that Jehovah will again restore his people to Jerusalem.

The two opening lines appear to have come down from the days of the exodus itself, for both the early Judean and Ephraimite narratives have retained them, although the one puts it in the mouth of Moses and the other of Miriam. Cf. Vol. I, p. 176. The older version is probably that of ^{2}, *Sing ye to Jehovah*, the first person in ^{1} being due to attraction. Some scholars have also been inclined to see in $^{2, 3}$ and others in $^{1-11, 18}$ a Mosaic kernel. While this is not impossible, the evidence that $^{2-18}$ constitute a literary unit is strong. The parallelism of the succeeding stanzas is very marked, and this corresponds to the changes in metre: the first, a stanza of four lines of three beats each, contains an ascription of praise to Jehovah. This is followed by a stanza of four lines of five beats each, describing vividly the deliverance at the exodus. Vss. $^{6, 7}$, with lines of four beats, repeat in different language the ascription of praise to Jehovah, and then $^{8-10}$ give another picture of the exodus. Then $^{11-13}$ repeat the ascription and the rest of the poem cites other illustrations of Jehovah's power to deliver his people. The idea of Jehovah as a warrior, ^{3}, is a characteristic Deuteronomic figure. Cf. Dt. 1^{30}, 3^{22}. Also there are several peculiar words and grammatical forms running through the entire poem which are found elsewhere only in exilic or post-exilic writings. Both the early Judean prophetic, ^{10}, and the late priestly versions, ^{8}, of the exodus are in the mind of the poet, indicating that he was familiar with them in their popular, if not in their later written composite form. Cf. Vol. I, § 74. Hence the poem in its final form probably comes from the earlier part or middle of the Persian period.

While the original couplet, $^{1b, 21}$, probably began, *Sing ye to Jehovah*, vs. ^{2} is, like many of the national pss., in the first person. This opening couplet is quoted in Is. 12^{2} and Ps. 118^{14} (with the same peculiar designation, *Jah*, for Jehovah), as if it were the opening words of an earlier song. Vss. $^{8, 17}$ are also quoted in Ps. $78^{13, 54}$; vs. ^{5} in Neh. 9^{11}. All these quotations are in passages later than 400 B.C., suggesting strongly that $^{2-18}$ was once an independent and yet well-known song, possibly sung, as it is by the Jews to-day, in connection with the Passover feast. A later editor very naturally and appropriately assigned it to its present place, giving it the prominent position that it really deserves.

[b] 15^{2} So three codices. Through a common error the Heb. has lost the sign of the pronominal suffix.

[c] 15^{2} Lit., *has become my deliverance*.

[d] 15^{3} This vs. may be joined to the preceding, but it seems more naturally to introduce Jehovah's deeds as a warrior fighting in behalf of his people.

[e] 15^{8} This follows the late priestly version of the deliverance at the exodus. An attempt has been made to reproduce the alliteration of the Heb.

I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them!'
10 Thou didst blow with thy breath, the sea covered him,
Into the mighty waters they sank like lead.

Jehovah's incomparable power

11 Who is like thee, O Jehovah, among the gods?
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,[f]
Inspiring awe by thy deeds, a worker of wonders?
12 Thou stretchest out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.[g]
13 Thou hast led in thy mercy this people, thy redeemed,
Thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy abode.

Illustrated by the way he established his people in Canaan, overcoming all their foes

14 The peoples heard it, in terror they tremble,
Pain hath seized the dwellers in Philistia;
15 Then the chiefs of the clans of Edom were dismayed,
The leaders[h] of Moab—trembling hath seized them,
All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.
16 Terror and dread fall upon them,
Through the greatness of thy arm they are dumb as stone;
Until, O Jehovah, thy people pass over,[i]
Yea, until thy people that thou hast purchased[j] pass over.
17 Thou bringest them and plantest them in the mountains of thine inheritance,
In the place, O Jehovah,[k] which thou hast prepared for thy abode,
In the sanctuary, O Jehovah, which thy hands have established.
18 Jehovah reigneth as king forever.

§ 3. The Great Victory over the Canaanites, Judg. 5^{2-31}

Exordium: the theme of the song

Judg. 5 2 That the leaders took the lead in Israel,
That the people volunteered readily,
Bless Jehovah!
3 Hear, O kings,
Give ear, O rulers,

---

f 15^{11} Or *majesty;* the Heb. idea of holiness and majesty were very closely related. Cf. Isaiah's vision, Is. 6.

g 15^{12} Cf. the fate of the rebels, Dathan and Abiram, Nu. $16^{31, 32a, 33a}$, Dt. 11^{6}, Vol. I, § 92, who were swallowed up by the opening earth.

h 15^{15} Lit., *reins*, the leaders of the flock.

i 15^{16} The reference is not primarily to the crossing of the Red Sea but to passing through Edom and the borders of Moab to the Jordan.

j 15^{16} Cf. Ps. 74^{2}.

k 15^{17} So Gk. and Lat. and certain Syr. MSS. Heb., *Lord*.

§ 3 The authorship, date, literary characteristics, and translation of this ancient song have already been discussed in Vol. I, § 139. It is the longest and noblest example of the triumphal ode in the O.T. In a series of dramatic scenes it presents the feelings of the actors and the important stages in the decisive battle which determined the mastery of Canaan and the fate of Jehovah's people. The prominence of Deborah and Jael and the tragic interest in the mother of Sisera, as she sits anxiously awaiting the arrival of her son, strongly suggest the feminine point of view and favor the conclusion that the author was a woman who voiced the impassioned feelings of the women as they witnessed the battle, and then, like Miriam and the women of Israel at an earlier time, or the daughters of Israel in the days of David, celebrated the victory as the conquering warriors returned.

The poem is so old and has suffered so much in transmission that it is impossible to determine the exact metre. Apparently the two and three beat measures were both used. As in David's lament over Saul and Jonathan, the variations are frequent and the metrical structure untrammelled. For fragments of still older triumphant odes, cf. the song sung to commemorate the victory over the Moabites in Nu. 21^{27b-30}, Vol. I, § 66, and over the Amorites, Josh. $10^{12, 13}$, Vol. I, § 114.

I myself will sing to Jehovah,
I will praise Jehovah, Israel's God.

Jehovah's advent

4 Jehovah when thou wentest forth from Seir,
When thou marchedst from the land of Edom,
The earth trembled violently,
The heavens also dripped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
5 The mountains quaked before Jehovah,
Yon Sinai, before Jehovah, Israel's God.

Conditions before the battle

6 In the days of Shamgar, Anath's son,
In Jael's days, the highways were unused,
And travellers walked along by-paths.
7 Rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,
Until thou, Deborah, didst arise,
Until thou didst arise a mother in Israel.
8 A shield was not seen in five cities,
Nor a spear among forty thousand.

Present causes for thanksgiving

9 My heart is with the commanders of Israel,
Who volunteered readily among the people;
Bless Jehovah!
10 You who ride on tawny asses,
Who sit on rich saddle-cloths,
And you who walk by the way, proclaim it.
11 Far from the sound of the division of spoil,
In the places where water is drawn,
Let them rehearse the righteous acts of Jehovah,
The righteous acts of his rule in Israel.

The rally about Deborah and Barak

Then Jehovah's people went down to the gates:
12 'Arise, arise, Deborah,
Arise, arise, strike up the song!
Arise, Barak, be strong,
Take thy captives, son of Abinoam!'
13 So a remnant went down against the powerful,
The people of Jehovah against the mighty.
14 From Ephraim they rushed into the valley,
Thy brother Benjamin among thy peoples,
From Machir went down commanders,
And from Zebulun those who carry the marshal's staff.
15 And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
And Naphtali was even so with Barak,
Into the valley they rushed forth at his back.

By Reuben's brooks great were the resolves!
16 Why didst thou sit amongst the sheepfolds,

Listening to the pipings of the flocks?
By Reuben's brooks great were the questionings!
17 And Gilead remained beyond the Jordan;
Why does Dan stay aloof by the ships?
Asher sits still by the sea shore,
And remains by his landing places.

The cowards who remained at home

18 Zebulun was a people that faced death,
And Naphtali on the heights of the open field.
19 Kings also came, they fought;
They fought, the kings of Canaan,
At Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;
They took no booty of silver.
20 From heaven fought the stars,
From their courses fought against Sisera.
21 The River Kishon swept them away,
The ancient river, the River Kishon.
O my soul, march on with strength!
22 Then did the horse-hoofs resound
With the galloping, galloping of their steeds.

The battle by the river Kishon

23 Curse Meroz, said the Messenger of Jehovah,
Curse bitterly its inhabitants;
For they came not to the help of Jehovah,
To the help of Jehovah against the mighty.

The cowardly people of Meroz

24 Blessed above women shall Jael be,
That wife of Heber the Kenite,
Blessed above all nomad women!
25 Water he asked, milk she gave;
Curdled milk she brought him
In a bowl well fitted for lords!
26 She put her hand to the tent-pin,
Even her right hand to the workman's hammer;
She struck Sisera, she crushed his head,
She shattered, she pierced his temple.
27 He bowed at her feet, he fell, he lay still,
At her feet he bowed, he fell;
Where he bowed, he fell a victim slain.

Jael's brave act

28 Through the window she peered and cried,
The mother of Sisera, through the lattice:
'Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the hoof-beats of his chariotry?'
29 The wisest of her ladies answered her,
She herself also answered her question,
30 'Are they not finding, dividing the spoil?

The anxiety in Sisera's palace

A woman or two for each warrior,
For Sisera a spoil of dyed stuffs,
A spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered,
A few pieces of embroidery for his neck?'

Epilogue

31a So perish all thine enemies, O Jehovah!
But let they who love him be as the sun,
Rising in its invincible splendor!

§ 4. The Victory over the Philistines, I Sam. 18^{7}

David's achievements

I Sam. 18 7 The women sang to each other as they danced:
Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his tens of thousands.

II

TRADITIONAL ORACLES

Gen. 3^{14b-19}, 9^{25b-27}, $12^{2, 3}$, 49^{2-27}, Dt. 33, Nu. $24^{3b-9, 15b-19}$, $23^{7b-10, 18b-22, 24}$, II Sam. 7^{10-16}, 23^{1-7}

§ 5. The Curse upon Serpent-kind, Gen. $3^{14b, 15}$

Popular explanation of why serpents wriggle through the dust

Gen. 3 14b Cursed shalt thou be above all animals,
And above all the beasts of the field.

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§ 4 The occasion was the great victory of the Hebrews over the Philistines, which, according to I Sam. 17, was inaugurated by the slaying of Goliath by David. This particular fragment of the triumphal song was remembered because it marked the passing of popular favor from Saul to the youthful David, which aroused the bitter jealousy of Israel's first king.

Traditional Oracles.—Among the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Romans (especially during the imperial period), and among most peoples of antiquity, oracles were very common and highly appreciated. The primitive ancestors of the Hebrews, like the early Arabs, undoubtedly often resorted to the priest or prophet in order to determine what was the divine will before undertaking an important enterprise. For an interesting example of the Heb. oracle, cf. I Sam. 30^{8}. The answer was probably from earliest times cast in poetic form, as it was by Delphic priestess or Arabian *kâhin*. The common basis of all these oracles was the universal psychological motive which impels men to seek to ascertain from the god or gods what the future is destined to bring forth. The poetic form was employed because it was deemed the more impressive and appropriate way of expressing the divine will.

Early in Israel's history the oracle became the model of a peculiar type of literature. Starting with some striking fact in nature, as the peculiar habits of serpents, or in history, as the Heb. conquest of the early Canaanites, the poet-prophet presented the popular or prophetic explanation of these facts in the form of an oracular curse or blessing put in the mouth of Jehovah or some early ancestor like Noah or Jacob. As in Cranmer's prediction of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, act V, scene 5, the poet writes with a detailed knowledge of the event but assumes a point of view antedating it. Sometimes he incorporated ancient proverbs or tribal songs, perhaps already attributed by tradition to some early saint. It is often difficult to determine whether the oracles originated with the prophet, who has given them their present setting, or were derived by him from some earlier source. Usually they are earlier poems, as, for example, the description of the different tribes in Gen. 49.

These ancient traditional oracles are the literary prototypes of the later Jewish apocalypses such as are found in the books of Enoch, Daniel, and Revelation. Some of them also employ obscure language and the symbolism of animals, as do the later forms of this same peculiar literature. Some of them, like those in Gen. 49, throw light upon recondite events in the early history of the tribes. Others reflect the primitive faith of the early Hebrews; but their chief value lies in the light which they throw upon the motives and aspirations of the Israelites and the philosophy of life which guided them in the earliest stages of their national and religious development.

§ 5 For the setting of this oracle, cf. Vol. I, § 2. This ancient curse represents the prophetic explanation of why serpents, unlike ordinary animals, were compelled to go wriggling through the dust, the mortal enemies of men and the object of their constant attack.

On thy belly shalt thou go,
And dust shalt thou eat,
All the days of thy life.

[15]Enmity will I set between thee and the woman,
And between thy offspring and her offspring.
He shall bruise thee on the head,
And thou shalt wound him on the heel.

Of the unceasing warfare between man and serpent-kind

§ 6. The Divine Judgment upon Womankind, Gen. 3[16]

Gen. 3 [16]I will make thy pain great in thy pregnancy,
With pain shalt thou bring forth children;
Yet toward thy husband shall be thy desire,
And he shall rule over thee.

Explanation of the pains of child-birth and of woman's lot

§ 7. The Divine Judgment upon Man, Gen. 3[17b-19]

Gen. 3 [17b]Cursed shall the ground be because of thee,
By painful toil shalt thou eat from it all the days of thy life.
[18]Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth for thee,
And thou shalt eat the herb of the field.
[19]By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat,
Until thou return to the ground,
Because from it thou wast taken;
For dust thou art,
And to dust shalt thou return.

Explanation of man's painful lot

§ 8. The Noah Oracle, Gen. 9[25b-27]

Gen. 9 [25b]Cursed be Canaan,
May he be a servant of servants to his brothers.

The fortunes of the Canaanites

[26]Blessed of Jehovah be Shem;
Let Canaan also be a servant to him.

Of the Hebrews

[27]God enlarge Japheth,
And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;
Let Canaan also be a servant to him.

Of their Western neighbors

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§ 6 The natural basis of this oracle is the pain which woman had to bear as mother and Oriental wife. As in the immediately preceding and following oracles, all pain and misfortune and discomfort are traced back to sin as the cause.

§ 8 *Canaan* in this ancient oracle represents the Canaanites, whom the Hebrews, the descendants of Shem, conquered and enslaved. *Japheth* is probably here to be identified with the Phœnicians. It possibly also included their colonies along the shores of the Mediterranean. The underlying historical fact, which this oracle formulates, is that the rich, opulent, highly civilised Canaanites were subjugated and completely absorbed by the semi-barbarous nomadic Israelites, who, in turn, as in the days of David and Solomon, made close commercial alliances with the Phœnicians. Primitive thought apparently explained this strange event in the terms of this oracle, which is equivalent to saying that it was thus divinely decreed. The prophet, however, who has incorporated the oracle in its present setting, goes deeper and presents the true explanation: it was because of the moral depravity of the Canaanites and the superior moral and religious sense of the Hebrews that the latter attained the ascendency over the decadent and immoral Canaanites. Cf. Vol. I, § 5.

§ 9. Jehovah's Blessing upon Abraham's Descendants, Gen. $12^{2, 3}$

The prosperity promised to the Hebrews

Gen. 12 [2]I will make thee a great nation,
And I will bless thee and magnify thy name,
So that thou shalt be a blessing.
[3]I will bless them that bless thee,
And him that curseth thee will I curse,
So that all the families of the earth
Shall invoke a like blessing for themselves.[a]

§ 10. Jacob's Blessing upon the Tribes, Gen. 49^{2-27}

Exordium

Gen. 49 [2]Assemble,[b] O sons of Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.[c]

Reuben ruled by ungovernable passions

[3]Reuben thou art my first-born,[d]
My strength and the first-fruit of my manhood,

---

§ 9 This is the oldest early Judean version of that divine promise to the Israelitish race through Abraham which is repeated in fourfold form in Gen. 15 and 17. Cf. Vol. I, § 16. It embodies those early hopes and aspirations of which the days of David and Solomon were the historical basis. Vs. [3] voices the attitude toward the outside world that was dominant until the experiences of the exile opened the eyes of certain prophets to the idea of unselfish service. Cf. Gen. 25^{23}, Vol. I, § 28, for the brief Jacob-Esau birth oracle; Gen. 27^{27b-29}, Vol. I, § 30, for Isaac's blessing upon Jacob; Gen. $27^{39b, 40}$, Vol. I, § 30, for Isaac's blessing on Esau; and Gen. $48^{15, 16}$, Vol. I, § 55, for Jacob's blessing upon Ephraim and Manasseh.

[a] 12^{3} The current translation, *shall be blessed*, is not supported by the Heb. nor the parallel passages. Cf. Vol. I, § 12, note [f].

§ 10 To Jacob, the traditional father of the twelve tribes of Israel, the different oracles relating to them were appropriately attributed, just as to Isaac were assigned the Jacob-Esau oracles. This traditional ascription is embodied not only in the present early Judean prophetic setting, vs. [1], but also in the introduction to the oracle itself, [2]. Thus the evidence is strong that the tendency to attribute anonymous writings to certain prominent characters of a preceding age was very early, for the present poem in its completeness apparently antedates the division of the Hebrew Empire. It is, indeed, the national song of united Israel and may well come from a court poet in the days of David, who collected the earlier tribal songs and added the exordium and the exuberant description of the conquest and rule of Judah under the leadership of the great king from Bethlehem, [8-12]. After the division and the events which followed he would not, in all probability, have sung:

The scepter shall not pass from Judah,
Nor the royal staff from between his feet.

Nowhere are these later calamities reflected. The tone of the poem is critical and the guilty tribes are condemned; but the spirit in general is jubilant, and there is no evidence that the poet wrote later than the middle of the reign of David or that of Solomon. This conclusion is also confirmed by the vocabulary and literary style which are primitive. The same is true of the institutions and religious ideas.

It is evident that many popular songs, some describing the situation, some the characteristics, and some the striking experiences of the different tribes have here been woven together. Several of them evidently, *e. g.*, those regarding Zebulun and Issachar, anticipate conditions antedating the union of the tribes or even the situation reflected in Judg. 5. Some contain allusions to incidents recorded in the traditions of Gen., *e. g.*, 34, and others to prehistoric events. In the suggestions which it furnishes regarding the earliest beginnings of Israel's life, the ancient poem is of great historical value.

With only a very few doubtful exceptions, the three-beat measure prevails throughout these poems. The ideas are simple and the literary style is crude but vigorous. They record the first beginnings of philosophical thinking. There are traces also of a didactic purpose: in the opening stanzas, for example, the poet is seeking to formulate the principles illustrated by the bitter experience of the tribes.

[b] 49^{2} *And hear* has apparently been added by mistake, for the same verbal idea is found in the next line.

[c] 49^{2} Cf. the introductions to the later prophetic messages, Is. 1^{10}, 28^{14}, 32^{9}, Mic. 1^{1}.

[d] 49^{3} Lit., *first of my strength*; Gk., *the first of my children*. Cf. Dt. 21^{17}, Ps. 105^{36}, Hos. 12^{3b}. Reuben was probably regarded as the first-born because this tribe was the first to settle in its east-Jordan home.

First[e] in dignity and strength,[f]
[4]Boiling over like water, thou shalt not be first,
For thou wentest up to the bed of thy father,[g]
Then thou defiledst my couch in going up on it.

Simeon and Levi violent and treacherous

[5]Simeon and Levi are akin,[h]
Weapons of violence are their swords,
[6]Into their council, O my soul, do not enter,
In their assembly, O my heart,[i] do not join;[j]
For men[k] in their anger they slew,
And oxen in their wantonness they hocked.[l]
[7]Accursed is their anger that it is so fierce,
And their wrath because it is so cruel;
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.

Judah, the ruling tribe, victorious and prosperous

[8]Judah, thy brothers praise thee![m]
Thy hand is on the neck of thy enemies.[n]
Before thee thy father's sons bow down.
[9]Judah is a whelp of a lion.
From the prey, my son, thou hast gone up;[o]
He has crouched, he has lain down as a lion,
As an old lion, who will disturb him?
[10]The sceptre shall not pass from Judah,
Nor the royal staff[p] from between his feet,[q]
And to him is due the obedience of the people.
[11]Binding his foal to the vine,
And his ass's colt to the choice vine,[r]
He hath washed his garments in wine,

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[e] 49[3] Lit., *pre-eminence*.

[f] 49[3] Lit., *native strength*. The Gk. interpretation followed above apparently represents the original thought.

[g] 49[4] Cf. the crime of Reuben recorded in Gen. 35[22], that of incest.

[h] 49[5] Lit., *brothers*, they are of the same type as well as blood kin.

[i] 49[6] Lit., *liver*, according to ancient Semites a seat of the feelings. So Gk. and the original Heb., supported by the context.

[j] 49[6] Or *unite*, *i. e.*, do not join.

[k] 49[6] So Gk., which correctly interprets the Heb., *man*, as generic, equal to mankind.

[l] 49[6] The most heinous of crimes in the ancient nomadic life, that of hocking an ox. It recalls the summary punishment meted out in the pioneer periods to horse thieves. The historical reference probably is to the treachery of the Reubenites and Levites in breaking their covenant and slaying the Shechemites as recorded in Gen. 34.

[m] 49[8] The Heb., as frequently in this ancient poem, has a play on the proper name *Jehudah—jôdûkâ*.

[n] 49[8] *I. e.*, as conqueror.

[o] 49[9] *I. e.*, sated with prey slain by his irresistible blow.

[p] 49[10] The picture is that of a king sitting on his throne with the end of his sceptre resting between his feet.

[q] 49[10] If the line, which follows in the Heb., is original, it probably is to be interpreted *As long as one goes to Shiloh*. Cf. the corresponding expression in the early Judean prophetic narrative of Judg. 18[31], *So they set up Micah's graven image . . . as long as the hand of God was in Shiloh*, Sam., Gk., Sym., Theod., and Targ. Onkelos, however, give the messianic rendering, *Until that one comes to whom it belongs*, but it can hardly be original, for this interpretation assumes a Heb. word found only in the latest O.T. writings. Furthermore, the line interrupts the context. It was apparently suggested to a late scribe who lived after the fall of the Judean house and who looked, in common with the men of his day, for the re-establishment of the Davidic messianic rule.

[r] 49[11] Symbolic of the abundance and fertility of the vineyards of Judah.

And his clothing in the blood of grapes;
[12]His eyes are red with wine,
And his teeth are white with milk.

Zebulun's favored situation

[13]Zebulun, by the sea-shore he dwells;[s]
He is by a shore that is lined with ships,[t]
And his border extends to Sidon.[u]

Issachar's ignominious submission to the Canaanites

[14]Issachar, he is a strong-limbed[v] ass,
Crouching down between the sheepfolds,[w]
[15]And when he saw the resting place was good,
That the land also was pleasant,
He bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a slave under a taskmaster.[x]

Dan, independent, small, but quick to avenge its wrongs

[16]Dan, he judges[y] his own people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.
[17]Dan is a serpent by the way,
A horned-adder beside the path,
That biteth the horse's heel,
So that his rider falleth backward.
[18]I have waited for thy deliverance, O Jehovah![z]

Gad, exposed but warlike

[19]Gad, robber-bands[a] press upon him,
But he also shall press upon their heel.[b]

Asher, rich and productive

[20]Asher, his bread is fatness,
And he yields royal dainties.

Naphtali, strong and flourishing

[21]Naphtali, he is a flourishing terebinth,[c]
That sends forth beautiful branches.

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[s] 49[13] Cf. Dt. 33[18, 19].
[t] 49[13] Lit., *shore of ships*.
[u] 49[13] So Gk. Heb., lit., *and his back is upon Sidon*.
[v] 49[14] Lit., *bony, i. e.*, supplied with strong bones.
[w] 49[14] Cf. Judg. 5[16].
[x] 49[15] Lit., *a slave to task-work*.
[y] 49[16] Another play on the proper name *Dan—yădîn*. The reference is probably to the historic fact that the little tribe of Dan, in its remote home at the foot of Mount Hermon, ruled itself bravely and effectively, waging its battles with the larger foes about. Cf. Dt. 33[22].
[z] 49[18] Possibly a later addition, yet not inappropriate in the present context, for only with the help of the divine deliverer could the little tribe hope to emerge triumphantly from the unequal conflict.
[a] 49[19] Another play on the proper name, *Gad gĕdûd yĕgûdĕnnû*. An allusion to the constant attacks of the Ammonites and Arabians to which the Gadites, because of their exposed situation, were subject. Cf. Dt. 33[20, 21].
[b] 49[19] The final letter of this line has, through a copyist's error, been prefixed to the next line. The Gk. has preserved the original reading.
[c] 49[21] The translation of this vs. is doubtful. The usual translation is:

Naphtali is a hind set free,
That gives forth pleasant words.

The above reading, however, is based upon the Heb. consonantal text and on the whole gives a clearer and more intelligible picture.

Joseph, strong, valiant, and pre-eminently prosperous

22 Joseph, he is a fruitful branch,
A fruitful branch by a spring,
His tendrils run over the wall.[d]
23 They bitterly attack, they shoot at him,
The archers hatefully assail him,
24 But his bow remains ever bent,[e]
His forearms[f] also are supple,
Through the power of the Mighty one of Jacob,[g]
In the name[h] of the Shepherd[i] of Israel,
25 The God of thy fathers, who ever helpeth thee,
And El-Shaddai[j] [God Almighty], who blesseth thee,
With blessings of heaven above,
And of the great deep that coucheth beneath,
With blessings of the breast and womb,
26 With blessings of father and mother,[k]
With blessings of the everlasting mountains,[l]
With the gifts[m] of the ancient hills!
They shall be on the head[n] of Joseph,
On the head of the consecrated[o] among his brothers.

Benjamin, famous in war

27 Benjamin is a ravening wolf,
In the morning he devoureth prey,
And at evening divideth spoil.

§ 11. Moses' Blessing upon the Tribes, Dt. 33

Jehovah's revelation as deliverer, guide, and ruler of Israel

Dt. 33 1 *This is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, blessed the Israelites before his death,* 2 *and he said:*
Jehovah came from Sinai,
He beamed from Seir in their behalf,[p]

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[d] 49^{22} This rendering is doubtful.
[e] 49^{24} Lit., *in strength.*
[f] 49^{24} Lit., *arms of his hands.*
[g] 49^{24} Or *steer of Jacob.* The phrase may go back to the days when Jehovah was worshipped under the symbol of a steer.
[h] 49^{24} Following a slightly different vowel pointing, which is supported by the Syr. The current translations make little sense.
[i] 49^{24} The Heb. adds *stone*, but this is not supported by the Gk. versions nor by the context. The reference is to the stone of Bethel. Cf. Is. 30^{29}.
[j] 49^{25} So Sam., Gk., and Syr. Cf. Gen. 17^{1} and Vol. I, § 16, note [e].
[k] 49^{25} So Gk., supported by the context. The Heb. is evidently corrupt. Possibly it originally read *with blessings on father and man and child.*
[l] 49^{26} So Gk. and slightly restored Heb. text.
[m] 49^{26} Lit., *that which is desirable;* Gk., *blessings.*
[n] 49^{26} Lit., *crown of the head.*
[o] 49^{26} Lit., *a Nazirite.*

§ 11 This song is a later and widely variant version of the so-called blessing of Jacob in Gen. 49. Both refer to the geographical position, character, and experiences of the different tribes. The description of Joseph is in many lines verbally identical in both, showing that one poet was familiar with the work of the other. Dt. 33, however, is a more perfect unit, being provided with a noble and deeply religious prologue and epilogue. The style also is much more finished and the tone eulogistic. The conquest is only a distant memory of the past, $^{27, 28}$. The tribe of Simeon has disappeared entirely. Reuben is few in numbers and in danger of becoming extinct and the Levites have become an honored caste of priests. Judah, instead of ruling over all the tribes, as in Gen. 49^{8-10}, is apart by itself and in danger of being overwhelmed by its adversaries. Joseph, represented by the powerful tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, is the object of the poet's pride.

Clearly the poem was written after the division of David's empire in 937 and before the

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[p] 33^{2} Gk., Luc., and Targ., *for us.*

He shone forth from Mount Paran,
And approached from Meribath-Kadesh;[q]
From his right hand fire flamed in their behalf.[r]
3 Yea, he loved his people,[s]
Its holy ones[t] were each under thy care,[u]
And they, indeed, followed[v] at thy feet,[w]
While [thy people][x] received thy words.
4 He[y] decreed for us a law,
A possession for the assembly of Jacob,
5 And he became king in Jeshurun,
When the heads of the people were assembled,
All together, the tribes of Israel.

Prayer for Reuben's preservation

6 Let Reuben live and not die,
But let his men be few in number.

For restoration of Judah to Israel

7 *And this is the blessing of Judah; and he said:*
Hear, O Jehovah, his voice,
And bring thou Judah[z] to his people;[a]
With thy hands contend thou for him,
And be thou a help from his adversaries.[b]

---

armies of Assyria, in 736 B.C., brought disaster to the northern tribes. The days of Jeroboam I have been suggested as the background, but they were overshadowed by the act of disruption and the invasion of Shishak. The only entirely satisfactory setting is the middle of the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II. Victories over the Arameans and a strongly centralized government gave northern Israel, about the middle of the eighth century, its brilliant but brief Indian summer. A poet in the court of Jeroboam II is probably the author of this majestic poem, which voices the popular hopes and national pride that are the background of Amos's stern prophecies. About 750 B.C. may with assurance be accepted as the date of the tribal oracles in $^{6-25}$; possibly the prologue, $^{1-5}$, with its late words, may be an exilic or post-exilic addition. This is certainly true of the superscription, which probably came from the editor who introduced it into the book of Dt. and attributed the whole to the traditional author of this late prophetic book.

Except that both begin with Reuben, the order of the tribes in the two poems is essentially different: in Gen. 49 it is Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin; in Dt. 33, Reuben, Judah, Levi, Benjamin, Joseph, Zebulun, Issachar, Gad, Dan, Naphtali, and Asher.

The metre, as in Gen. 49, is the regular three-beat measure.

[q] 33^{2} The traditional punctuation of the Heb. gives the obscure reading *from the ten thousands of my holy ones*. But this makes no clear sense and is not supported by the context. The other reading of the Heb., which is followed above, gives a clear parallel to the preceding lines. Kadesh is mentioned in 1^{46} and 32^{51} and was apparently the centre of the religious life of the Israelites during their residence in the wilderness. The Sam., Syr., Lat., and Targ. connect the Heb. verb with another root and read *and with him were holy myriads*. Luc. and Gk., however, have, *with myriads of Kadesh*.

[r] 33^{2} The text is evidently corrupt. The Gk. and Luc. appear to have only guessed at the meaning and read *from his right angels were with him.* A slight correction of the Heb. gives the above reading, which is closely paralleled in the corresponding theophanies, Hab. 3^{4}, Ex. 20^{18}, Ps. 50^{3}. Possibly the word sometimes translated *law* is a gloss. It is found only in Ezra, Esther, and Dan. and is of Persian origin.

[s] 33^{3} Following the superior reading of the Gk. and Luc. Heb., *peoples*, *i. e.*, heathen nations, but this is out of harmony with the context, and especially the next line.

[t] 33^{3} *I. e.*, Israel's. The references to Israel as a holy nation are many, *e. g.*, 7^{6}, $14^{2.21}$, 26^{19}.

[u] 33^{3} Luc. has *in his lands;* Lat., *in his hand;* Heb., *in thy hand*.

[v] 33^{3} The Heb. verb in this line is hopelessly corrupt. The above is based upon the plausible reading of the Syr.

[w] 33^{3} Following the Lam. and a large number of MSS. in translating *feet* instead of the Heb., *foot*. For the idiom, cf. Gen. 30^{30}, 33^{14}; the meaning is, closely attended.

[x] 33^{3} The antecedent must be found in the first line of the vs.

[y] 33^{4} Heb., *Moses*, but the context indicates that *Jehovah* is the one in the mind of the poet.

[z] 33^{7} Transferring *Judah* to the second line of the couplet, as the measure requires.

[a] 33^{7} Probably written from the point of view of a northern Israelite and after the division of the kingdom, following the death of Solomon.

[b] 37^{7} Possibly a reference to Shishak's invasion soon after the division or to later attacks upon Judah.

Jehovah's oracles intrusted to the devoted and faithful Levites

8 *And of Levi he said:*
Thy Thummim and thy Urim are for thy holy one,
Whom thou didst prove at Massah.[c]
With whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah,[d]
9 Who saith of his father and his mother, 'I see him not,'
He doth not recognize his brothers,[e]
Nor doth he know his own children,
For [the Levites] keep thy word,
And strictly observe thy covenant;
10 They show Jacob thy judgments,
And Israel thy instructions, O Jehovah.
They bring to thy nostrils the savor of sacrifice,
And whole burnt offerings to thy altar.
11 Bless, O Jehovah, his might.[f]
And be pleased with the work of his hands.
Smite[g] through the loins of his opposers,
And of those who hate him that they rise not.

Jehovah's presence in his temple protects Benjamin

12 *And*[h] *of Benjamin he said:*
The beloved of Jehovah dwells securely,[i]
And the Lord[j] encompasseth him at all times,
And he dwelleth between his shoulders.[k]

The abounding fertility and military strength of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh

13 *And of Joseph he said:*
Blessed of Jehovah be his land,
With the choice fruits from heaven above,[l]
And from the deep that coucheth beneath,
14 And with the choice fruits which the sun bringeth forth,
And with the choice fruits that the months yield,
15 And from the tops of the ancient mountains,
And with the choice fruits of the everlasting hills,
16 And with the choice fruits of the earth and its fullness,
And with the favor of him who dwelt in the bush—[m]
Let them come upon the head of Joseph,
Upon the brow of the one crowned among his brothers.[n]

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[c] 33^{8} The allusion apparently is to some event not recorded in the Pent.
[d] 33^{8} Cf. Ex. $17^{2a, 7}$, Nu. $20^{3a, 13}$
[e] 33^{9} The reference probably is to the seal of the Levites recorded in Ex. 32^{27-29}, when they did not hesitate to slay even their apostate kinsmen. Cf. Jesus' words in Mt. 10^{37}, Lk. 14^{26}.
[f] 33^{11} The Heb. word means possessions or else, as here, efficiency in the discharge of responsibility.
[g] 33^{11} So Sam. and Gk. Heb., *smote through in the loins*.
[h] 33^{12} So Sam. and Gk. The Heb. has lost the *and*.
[i] 33^{12} The Sam., Gk., and Syr. omit, but the present Heb. adds the awkward and obscure, *beside him*.
[j] 33^{12} With Luc. we require *the Lord* to make the meaning clear.
[k] 33^{12} *I. e.*, in his temple at Jerusalem, situated on the sloping hills which, according to Josh. 15^{8}, 18^{16}, lay within the bounds of Benjamin.
[l] 33^{13} Heb., *from the dew*, but the parallelism supports and demands the slight emendation which gives the above reading. Cf. the same idiom, Gen. 27^{39}. In 49^{25} this vs., in the same original form, is also found.
[m] 33^{16} Probably reference to Jehovah's revelation to Moses through the burning bush, recorded in Ex. 3^{2-4}. A slight change in the text gives the possible reading *who dwelt in Sinai*.
[n] 33^{16} Cf. 49^{26}.

17 His first-born bullock hath[o] majesty,
His horns are horns of a wild ox;[p]
With them he pusheth peoples,
All together to the ends of the earth.
Those are the myriads of Ephraim,
And those are the thousands of Manasseh.

The religious festivals and commerce of Zebulun and Issachar

18 *And of Zebulun he said:*
Rejoice, O Zebulun, in thy going out,
And thou, O Issachar, in thy tents,
19 They call peoples to the mountain,
There they offer sacrifices of righteousness,
For they suck up the abounding riches of the sea,
And the hidden treasures of the sand.

The warlike prowess and strong rule of the Gadites

20 *And of Gad he said:*
Blessed be he[q] who enlargeth Gad;
He dwelleth like a [couching][r] lioness,[s]
And teareth both the arm and the crown of the head;
21 And he searched out[t] the first part for himself,
For them a commander's portion was reserved;
And he came with the heads of the people.
He executed the righteous will[u] of Jehovah
And his judgments concerning Israel.

Bravery of the Danites

22 *And of Dan he said:*
Dan is a lion's whelp
That leapeth forth from Bashan.[v]

Rich territory of Naphtali

23 *And of Naphtali he said:*
O Naphtali, satisfied[w] with favor,
And rich in the blessing of Jehovah,
He possesseth the sea and the southland.

Prosperity and protection for Asher

24 *And of Asher he said:*
Blessed above sons be Asher,
Let him be the favored one among his brothers,
As he dips his feet in oil!
25 Thy bolts[x] be iron and bronze;
And as thy days, so let thy strength be.

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[o] 33[17] *I. e.*, Ephraim. Cf. Gen. 48[13-19] and the latter part of this vs.
[p] 33[17] The gigantic ox of the Assyrian inscriptions, famous for its huge horns and great strength.
[q] 33[20] *I. e.*, Jehovah, who enables the Gadites to extend their territory in the much-contested east-Jordan land.
[r] 33[20] The fame of the Gadites as fierce warriors was well established. Cf. Gen. 49[19], I Chr. 12[8].
[s] 33[20] In its present form this line has but two beats.
[t] 33[21] Restoring the corrupt Heb. text.
[u] 33[21] Lit., *righteousness*.
[v] 33[22] *I. e.*, a lion of Bashan. Probably the northern Danites are referred to by the poet.
[w] 33[23] Lit., *full*.
[x] 33[25] Following the Gk., Syr., and Theod. The meaning of the Heb. is unknown.

26 There is none like the God of Jeshurun,[y] — *Jehovah's provisions and protecting care for his people*
Who rideth through the heavens to keep thee,
And in his exalted majesty upon the skies.
27 The God of old is a dwelling-place,
And underneath are everlasting arms;
And he drove out the enemy from before thee;
And said, 'Destroy;'
28 So Israel dwelt securely,
The fountain[z] of Jacob alone,
Upon a land of corn and wine,
And his heavens drop down dew.
29 Happy Israel! who is like thee?
A people saved by Jehovah,
The shield of thy help and thy mighty sword![a]
So shall thy enemies come cringing to thee,
And thou shalt tread upon their high-places.

§ 12. The Early Judean Prophetic Version of the Balaam Oracles, Nu. 24[3b-9, 15b-19]

Nu. 24 3b The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, — *Exordium*
Even the oracle of the man who seeth truly;
4 The oracle of him who heareth the words of God,
Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Falling down and having his eyes open.

5 How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob, — *Israel's prosperity, numbers, and strength*
Thy dwelling places, O Israel!
6 Like valleys are they spread out,
Like gardens by the river-side,
Like lign-aloes, which Jehovah hath planted,
Like cedars beside the waters.
7 Water shall flow from his buckets,
And his seed shall be in abundant waters,
And his king shall be higher than Agag,
And his kingdom shall be highly exalted.

8 God, who brought him forth out of Egypt, — *His victories over his foes*
Is for him like the strength of the wild-ox.
He shall devour the nations, his adversaries,
And shall break their bones in pieces,
And pierce his oppressors with arrows.
9 He crouches, he lies down like a lion,
And like a lioness, who shall stir him up?
Blessed is every one who blesses thee,
And cursed is every one who curses thee.

---

y 33[26] Following the Gk., Syr., Lat., and a revised Heb. text.
z 33[28] Cf. Is. 48[1], Ps. 68[26]. A figure describing the race with its succeeding generations.
a 33[29] Lit., *the sword of thy dignity*.

Exordium to the second oracle

15b The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,
Even the oracle of the man who seeth truly,
16 The oracle of him who heareth the words of God,
And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,
Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Falling down and having his eyes open.

Conquests of the Hebrews under David

17 I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near;
A star comes forth out of Jacob,
And a sceptre arises out of Israel,
And shatters the temples of Moab,
And the skull of all the sons of Seth.
18 And Edom shall become a possession,
Seir shall also become a possession,
While Israel doeth valiantly.
19 And Jacob shall subdue his enemies,
And shall destroy the remnant from the city.

§ 13. The Northern Israelitish Version of the Balaam Oracles, Nu. $23^{7b-10,\ 18b-22,\ 24}$

The independent spirit and the great numbers of the Hebrews

Nu. 23 7b From Aram hath Balak brought me,
Moab's king from the mountains of the East:
'Come, curse Jacob for me,
And come, denounce Israel.'
8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?
And how shall I denounce, whom Jehovah hath not denounced?
9 For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I gaze upon him;
Behold a people dwelling alone,
And not accounting itself as one of the nations.
10 Who can count the dust of Jacob,
Or number the myriads of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my final end be like his!

Their prosperity

18b Arise, Balak, and hear;
Hearken to me, thou son of Zippor:
19 God is not man, that he should lie,
Nor a mortal, that he should repent;
Hath he said, and will he not do it?
Or hath he spoken, and will he not make good?
20 Behold, I have received command to bless;
Yea, he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.
21 No misfortune is perceived in Jacob;
And no trouble is seen in Israel.

Jehovah his God is with him,
And in his midst the shouts over a king.

[22]God, who brought them forth out of Egypt,
Is for him like the strength of the wild-ox.
[24]See, the people riseth up like a lioness,
And like a lion he lifteth himself up:
He doth not lie down until he eateth the prey,
And drinketh the blood of the slain.

Their invincible, warlike spirit

§ 14. Promises to the House of David, II Sam. 7^{10-16}

II Sam. 7 [10]I will appoint a place for my people Israel,
I will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place,
And that they may be moved no more,
And the wicked shall no more afflict them as before,
[11]From the day that I appointed judges over my people Israel.
I will give thee rest from all thine enemies,
And make thee great, and build thee a house.

Peace and stability

[12]And when thy days are complete,
And thou liest down with thy fathers,
I will raise up thy descendants after thee,
Who shall come forth from thy body;
And I will establish their kingdom.
[13]He shall build a home for my name,
And I will establish his royal throne forever.
[14]I will be to him a father,
And he shall be to me a son,
Whenever he committeth iniquity,
I will correct him with the rod of men,
And with the stripes of the sons of Adam.
[15]My kindness will I not withdraw from him.

Strong and permanent rule under divine protection

§ 15. The Last Words of David, II Sam. 23^{1-7}

II Sam. 23 [1]The oracle of David the son of Jesse,
The oracle of the man set on high.
The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the singer of the songs of Israel.

The title of the oracle

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§ 14 For detailed notes and setting, cf. Vol. II, § 29. This passage voices the popular hopes regarding the Judean royal house. Its language and that of its setting strongly suggest that it was not written until a short time before the exile; its hortatory note is that of the Deuteronomic school. Because of its setting and connection with David, the passage made a profound impression upon later psalm writers. Cf. especially Pss. 72, 89, 132.

§ 15 The elaborate prologue, the reference to David as *the singer of the songs of Israel*, [1], and the fulsome praise of David and of his rule in [3, 4] indicate that this traditional oracle is not from David but rather from a much later period when traditions were beginning to magnify the personality of Israel's early king. Vs. [5] contains a clear reference to the oracle in II Sam. 7^{10-15}. These indications carry its date down close to the Babylonian exile, and the wisdom note in the closing vss., if these be original, points to an even later date.

Its divine authority

2 Jehovah's spirit speaketh through me,
His word, also, is on my tongue.
3 The God of Jacob[b] saith,
Israel's Rock speaketh to me:

Blessings of a just rule

'The one who ruleth over men,
Who ruleth in the fear of God,
4 Like the morning light he ariseth,
Like the sun of a cloudless morn,
Which causeth the vegetation to spring from the earth.'[c]

Assurance of a stable dynasty

5 Yea, my house standeth firm before God,
For he hath made with me an eternal covenant,
Firmly established in all parts, and will keep[d] it,
For in him are all my salvation and pleasure.[e]

The instability of the wicked

6 For, verily, base men shall not flourish,
They are like unto thorns that are cast away,[f]
For one cannot gather them with the hand.
7 If a man does venture to touch them,
He is filled with iron and wooden spines;[g]
With fire shall they utterly be consumed.

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[b] II Sam. 23^3. Following the Old Lat. and Vulg. in substituting *Jacob* for the Heb., *Israel*, which is repeated in the next line.
[c] 23^4 Slightly revising the text. The Heb. adds *after the rain*.
[d] 23^5 So Luc. Heb., *kept*.
[e] 23^5 Again emending the Heb. as the context demands.
[f] 23^6 Or, revising the Heb., *thorns of the desert*.
[g] 23^7 A free revision of the text, suggested by Smith, *Sam.*, 382–3, gives the possible reading:

Nor doth a man labor for them,
Nor fight with iron and spear.

The text is exceedingly doubtful. The Heb. is followed above.

SONGS OF LAMENTATION

I. DIRGES OVER FALLEN HEROES

II Sam. 1^{17-26}, $3^{33, 34}$, Jer. 22^{10}

II. DIRGES OVER THE FALLEN NATION

Am. $5^{1, 2}$, Jer. 9^{17-22}, Lam. 2, 4, 1, 5, 3

SONGS OF LAMENTATION

I

DIRGES OVER FALLEN HEROES

II Sam. 1^{17-26}, $3^{33, 34}$, Jer. 22^{10}

§ 16. David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan, II Sam. 1^{17-26}

II Sam. 1 [17]Then David sang this dirge over Saul and Jonathan his son
[18](behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar), and said:

David's dirge

Weep, O Judah!
[19]Grieve, O Israel!
On thy heights are the slain!
How have the mighty fallen!

The greatness of the calamity

[20]Tell it not in Gath,
Declare it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

[21]Ye mountains of Gilboa, may no dew descend,
Nor rain upon you, O ye fields of death!
For there was the shield of the mighty cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

[22]From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
The sword of Saul returned not empty.

Bravery and attractiveness of the fallen

[23]Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the lovely!
In life and in death they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

[24]Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you daintily in fine linen,
Who put golden ornaments on your garments [and say]:
[25]'How have the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!'

Saul's services to Israel

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§ 16 This is one of the most beautiful elegies in the O.T. and beyond reasonable doubt comes from Israel's greatest king. Cf. Introd., p. 17, and Vol. II, § 21.

David's love for Jonathan

Jonathan, in thy death hast thou wounded me!
[26]I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan!
Thou wert surpassingly dear to me,
Thy love to me was far more than the love of woman!

Epilogue

How have the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

§ 17. David's Lament over Abner, II Sam. $3^{33, 34}$

II Sam. 3 [33]And the king sang a dirge for Abner and said:

Must Abner die as dies the impious fool?
[34]Thy hands were not bound,
Thy feet were not put into fetters;
As one falls before ruthless men, thou didst fall.

§ 18. Jeremiah's Lament over the Fate of Jehoahaz, Jer. 22^{10}

Jer. 22 [10]Weep not for him who is dead, nor wail for him;
Weep rather for him who is gone, for he shall not return,
And never again shall he see the land of his birth.

II

DIRGES OVER THE FALLEN NATION

Am. $5^{1, 2}$, Jer. 9^{17-22}, Lam. 2, 4, 1, 5, 3

§ 19. Amos's Dirge over the Impending Fall of Northern Israel, Am. $5^{1, 2}$

Am. 5 [1]Hear the word which I take up against you, even a dirge, O house of Israel:
[2]Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel!
Hurled down upon her own soil she lies, with none to raise her!

§ 20. Jeremiah's Lament over the Impending Fall of Judah, Jer. 9^{17-22}

Call to the mourning women

Jer. 9 [17]Summon the mourning women that they may come;
And send for the wise women [18]that they may quickly raise for us their voices in wailing;
That our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids flow with water.
[19]For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion, 'How are we ruined!

§ 17 This is an excellent example of the popular dirge.
§ 18 Cf., for a more highly developed dirge, Ezek. 19.
§ 19 In these dirges the object of the lament is not an individual but the nation. They are a fitting prologue to the longer dirges in Lam. which deal with the same theme.
§ 20 Cf. Vol. III, § 79. for detailed notes. Cf. also Jer. 12^{7-12}, Vol. III, § 94, for a similar dirge over sinful Judah.

We are greatly confounded, because they have cast down our dwellings!'
20 Hear, O women, and let your ears receive my words;
And teach your daughters wailing, and each her neighbor a dirge:

21 'Death is come up into our windows, it has entered into our palaces,
Cutting off the children from the streets, the young men from the open spaces.
22 The dead bodies of men fall as dung upon the open field,
And as the handful after the harvester, with none to gather them.'

The dirge that they are to sing

§ 21. Jehovah's Overwhelming Judgment upon Jerusalem, Lam. 2

Lam. 2 1 How the Lord hath beclouded in his anger the daughter of Zion!
He hath cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel,[a]
And he hath not kept in remembrance his footstool in the day of his anger.
2 The Lord hath swallowed up without mercy every habitation of Jacob,[b]
He hath thrown down in his wrath the strongholds of the daughter of Judah,
He hath struck to the ground, he hath polluted her king[c] and her princes.
3 He hath cut off in the fierceness of his anger[d] all of Israel's strength,[e]
He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy,
He hath burnt in Jacob like a flame, which devours on all sides.
4 He hath bent his bow as an enemy, he hath stood[f] as an adversary,
He hath slain all the desirable men in the tent of Zion,[g]
He hath poured out his fury as fire [on the daughter of Judah].[h]
5 The Lord hath become like an enemy, he hath swallowed up Israel,
He hath swallowed up all of his palaces, he hath destroyed his fortresses,
And he hath multiplied in the daughter of Judah sighing and lamentation.

1. Jehovah's dire judgment upon Judah (Lam. 2[1-5])

6 He hath torn down as a vine[i] his dwelling,[j] he hath destroyed his assembling place,
He[k] hath caused to be forgotten in Zion, the fast day and the sabbath,
And hath spurned in his indignant anger, both king and priest.
7 The Lord hath rejected his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary,

2. Also upon the temple and its service (6, 7)

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§ 21 The metrical structure of this poem is remarkably symmetrical. Only a few later glosses have crept in to disturb the regular rhythm of the five-beat measure. It falls naturally into two great divisions. Vss. 1-12 describe the fate of the different classes in the community upon whom the calamity had fallen with greatest severity. In the second general division, 13-22, the cause of the great judgment is presented and the nation is called upon to raise its voice in petition to Jehovah for pity, not because divine mercy is deserved but because of the overwhelming character of the judgment. As has been stated in the Introd., p. 19, the date of this poem is between 586 and 561 B.C.

[a] 2[1] Either the temple or the ark.

[b] 2[2] The metrical structure of this vs. is unusual, but no satisfactory reconstruction has been found.

[c] 2[2] So Syr. Heb., *the kingdom.*

[d] 2[3] So. Syr. and Lat. Heb., *in fierce anger.*

[e] 2[3] Lit., *horn*, as the symbol of strength.

[f] 2[4] The Heb. adds, interrupting the sense and metrical structure, *his right hand.*

[g] 2[4] Lit., *the desires of the eye, in the tent of the daughter of Zion*, *i. e.*, the citizens of Jerusalem.

[h] 2[4] The last part of this vs. that has been lost and is supplied according to the demands of the parallelism from [5].

[i] 2[6] So Gk. Heb., *garden.*

[j] 2[6] Heb., *hut;* the reference, however, is clearly to the temple and the original probably read as above.

[k] 2[6] The Heb. adds *Jehovah*, but to preserve the metre in the Eng. it has been omitted.

He hath given up into the hands of the enemy the ark of the covenant,[l]
They have made a din in the house of Jehovah, as in the solemn feast day.

3. Upon Jerusalem and its defences (8-10)

[8]Jehovah hath determined to destroy the wall of Zion,[m]
He hath stretched out the line, he hath not held back his hand from destroying,
He hath made rampart and wall lament, they mourn together,
[9]Sunk to the ground are her gates,[n] broken her bars.
Her king and her princes are among the heathen, and there is no law.
Moreover her prophets receive from Jehovah no vision.
[10]Silent, on the earth sit the elders of the daughter of Zion;
Dust they cast on their heads; they are girded with sackcloth;
With heads bowed to earth are the daughters of Jerusalem.

The helpless victims

[11]Mine eyes are wasted with tears, my compassions[o] are stirred,
My heart[p] is poured upon the earth for the wreck of my people,[q]
For the swooning of infant and suckling on the streets of the city.
[12]They say to their mothers, 'Alas![r] Where is grain and wine?'
While they swoon like those who are wounded in the streets of the city,
And pour out their soul in death[s] on their mothers' bosom.

Jerusalem betrayed by her prophets

[13]To what shall I compare[t] and liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?
What comparison can I find[u] to comfort thee, O daughter of Zion?
For great as the sea is thy wreck: Who then can heal thee?
[14]For thee thy prophets have predicted[v] both falsehood and delusion,[w]
And they have not laid bare thine iniquity, to bring back thy captivity,
But for thee they have beheld oracles that are false and misleading.[x]

Taunted by heathen foes

[15]All who pass by clap their hands over thee in derision,
They hiss and wag their head o'er the daughter of Jerusalem:
'Is this the city they called the perfection of beauty?'
[16]Against thee they open their mouth, even all thine enemies,
They hiss and gnash the teeth; they say, 'We have swallowed her[y] up;
Certainly this is the day we looked for; we have found it, we see it!'

---

[l] 2[7] So conjecturally with Budde. Heb. reads *wall and her palaces*, but the Heb. word for temple is masculine, and palaces are only used in connection with a city. The context supports the above, which may well be the basis of the present Heb.

[m] 2[8] Heb., *daughter of Zion*.

[n] 2[9] Heb. adds *and he hath destroyed*; but this is not compatible with the regular metre of the chapter.

[o] 2[11] Lit., *bowels*; thought by the Hebrews to be the seat of the sympathetic emotions.

[p] 2[11] Lit., *liver*; equivalent in Heb. thought to our modern figurative use of the word *heart*.

[q] 2[11] Lit., *daughter of my people*, *i. e.*, the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[r] 2[12] Supplying a word which a scribe probably confused with the following and so omitted.

[s] 2[12] With G. A. Smith supplying a missing word implied by the context.

[t] 2[13] Translating the Heb. by the aid of the Lat. and the context.

[u] 2[13] Lit., *what shall I compare to thee*. The Heb. idiom is difficult to transfer into Eng.

[v] 2[14] Lit., *seen in visions*.

[w] 2[14] Lit., *whitewash*.

[x] 2[14] Lit., *of falsehood and enticement*.

[y] 2[16] So Gk. and Syr. Heb., *him*.

Punished by Jehovah

17 Jehovah hath done that which he purposed; he hath fulfilled his word,
As he commanded in the days of old: he hath ruined pitilessly;
He hath let thine enemies rejoice over thee; he hath exalted their horn.[a]

Petition him for pity

18 Cry aloud to the Lord; and clamor,[a] O virgin[b] Zion;
Let tears run down like a river by day and by night;
Give to thyself no respite, and rest not thine eyes.[c]
19 Arise, cry out in the night at the beginning of the watches;
Pour out thy heart like water in the presence of the Lord;[d]
Lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy children.[e]

Pray this prayer

20 'See, O Jehovah, and behold to whom thou hast done thus!
Should the women devour their offspring, the children they fondled?
Or prophet and priest be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?
21 Strewn on the ground in the streets are boys and old men;
My virgins and my stalwart youths are fallen by the sword;
Thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger; thou hast slaughtered pitilessly.
22 Thou didst summon as if it were a feast day those dwelling around me;
But in the day of Jehovah's wrath no fugitive survived,[f]
Those whom I fondled and brought up, mine enemy hath destroyed.'

§ 22. The Magnitude of the Disasters That Jehovah Has Brought upon His People, Lam. 4

Fate of the best citizens of Zion

Lam. 4 1 How the gold has become dimmed, the finest gold changed!
The sacred stones are thrown out at the corners of every street![g]
2 The precious citizens of Zion, comparable to[h] fine gold,
How they are reckoned as earthen vessels, the work of a potter's hands!

Of the little children

3 Even the jackals present the breast, suckle their whelps,
But the daughter of my people is cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.
4 The tongue of the suckling child cleaves to his gum for thirst;
The little children beg for bread, no one breaks it for them.

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[a] 2[17] Slightly revising the Heb. as the metre suggests.

[a] 2[18] The Heb. is evidently corrupt. The above reading is based on a text emended as the context requires. The VSS. differ widely, showing that the corruption of the text was very old.

[b] 2[18] Revising the Heb., which reads *wall*.

[c] 2[18] Following a group of Heb. and Gk. MSS. Heb., *daughter of thine eyes*.

[d] 2[19] Many MSS. read *Jehovah*.

[e] 2[19] A scribe who had in mind 1[10] has added the prose gloss *who faint for hunger at the head of every street*.

[f] 2[22] *I. e.*, Jerusalem and its inhabitants. Cf. Job 18[19]. The figure was, perhaps, suggested by Jehu's gathering of the unsuspecting Baal worshippers in their temple in order to mete out to them a bloody judgment, II Kgs. 10[18-28]. The current rendering of the Heb. follows Jer. 42[17], 44[14].

§ 22 Cf., for date and interpretation, Introd., p. 19. This poem pictures even more vividly and feelingly than the preceding the fate of Jerusalem. The poet does not question for a moment the justice of that fate. It is because of the sins of her prophets and priests, [13]. In the magnitude of the disaster which has overtaken his people the poet finds hope that their guilt would be appeased and that the cup of divine judgment which Judah is now drinking to the dregs will soon be passed on to their guilty, arrogant foes, the Edomites, [21, 22].

[g] 4[1] Vs. [1] is explained by [2]. The sacred stones and the purest gold are the citizens of Zion.

[h] 4[2] Lit., *who are weighed against*.

Of those reared in luxury

5 They who once fed on dainties are desolate in the streets;
They who were reared upon purple embrace dunghills.
6 So the guilt of the daughter of my people was greater than Sodom's sin,
For she has been overthrown as in a moment, without any hands being wrung for her.[i]

Of the nobles

7 Her nobles[j] were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk;
Their skin was redder than coral,[k] their beauty[l] was as sapphire.
8 Now their appearance is darker than blackness, they are not recognized on the streets,
Their skin cleaves to their bones, it is as dry as a stick.

Of the women

9 More fortunate are those slain by the sword, than those slain by hunger,
For these pine away, stricken through,[m] for want of the fruits of the field.
10 The hands of tender-hearted women have boiled their own children;
They have become their food in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Jehovah's appalling judgment

11 Jehovah hath accomplished his work, he hath poured out his fury,
He hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath burnt up her foundations.
12 The kings of the earth believed not, nor the inhabitants of the world,[n]
That the adversary and foe would enter into the gates of Jerusalem.

Guilt and pollution of prophets and priests

13 It is because of the sins of her prophets, the crimes of her priests,[o]
Who have poured out in the midst of her the blood of the righteous.
14 They wander as blind men through the streets, they are polluted with blood,
That men may not touch them they draw aside their garments:
15 'Unclean!'[p] they cry to them, 'Depart,[q] do not touch';
For they wander and go to and fro[r] among the heathen, they no longer sojourn *here*.
16 The anger of Jehovah hath scattered them, he will no more regard them,
It respected not the person[s] of the priests, it favored not the prophets.[t]

The nation deserted by allies and the prey of its foes

17 Our eyes still fail in looking[u] for help that is unavailing,
In our watching we have watched in vain for a nation[v] that does not help.

---

[i] 4[6] The meaning is doubtful. The above follows the most probable rendering of the Heb. supported by the Gk. The idea is, so quickly did Jerusalem fall that there was no time to lament.

[j] 4[7] Gk. *Nazirites;* but the Heb. word elsewhere, as in Gen. 49[26], does not have this technical meaning.

[k] 4[7] Slightly emending the text, which in its present form makes no sense. Cf. [8b]. Another emendation reads *they were more ruddy than branches of coral*, but this contradicts the first line.

[l] 4[7] Lit., *polishing*.

[m] 4[9] The figure is that of hunger piercing its victims like the sword.

[n] 4[12] Lit., *all of the inhabitants*.

[o] 4[13] Cf. Jer. 6[13], 8[10], 23[11, 12], 26[20-22].

[p] 4[15] Cf. The warning of lepers, Lev. 13[45].

[q] 4[15] In the Heb. the '*depart*' is repeated three times, but it destroys the metrical structure of the vs.

[r] 4[15] The Heb. is untranslatable. A slight correction on the analogy of Gen. 4[12, 14] gives the above meaning. A scribe has added *they say*, but it is not supported by the metre or the context.

[s] 4[16] Lit., *faces*.

[t] 4[16] So Gk. Heb., *elders*.

[u] 4[17] Or *howling*. The Heb. text is doubtful.

[v] 4[17] *I. e.*, Egypt.

18Our adversaries[w] dog our footsteps, so that we cannot go in our streets;
Our days[x] are short, they are fulfilled, for our end has come.
19Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of heaven,
They have chased us upon the mountains, they have lain in wait for us in the wilderness.
20The breath of nostrils, Jehovah's anointed was taken in their pits,[y]
Of whom we said, 'In his shadow will we live among the nations!'

Ultimately its foes will be punished and the Jews vindicated

21Rejoice and be glad, O Edom,[z] that dwellest in the land![a]
Also to thee will the cup[b] come, thou shalt become drunken and naked.
22Thy guilt is purged away,[c] O Zion,[d] he will no more keep thee in captivity,
He will punish thy guilt, O Edom,[e] he will lay bare thy sins.

§ 23. Jerusalem's Desolation, Misery, and Guilt, Lam. 1

Jerusalem solitary and comfortless

Lam. 1 1See how she sitteth solitary,[f] that was once full of people!
The city hath become as a widow, she was mighty among the nations!
A princess among the provinces—she hath become subject to forced labor!
2Bitterly she weepeth at night, her tears are on her cheek;
She hath none to give her comfort, among all her lovers;[g]
All her friends have dealt with her treacherously, they have become her foes.

Her people in exile

3Judah is an exile[h] because of affliction and great servitude,[i]
She, indeed, dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest.[j]
All her pursuers have overtaken her, in the midst of her troubles.
4The roads to Zion mourn,[k] without pilgrims to the feast;
All her gates[l] are desolate, her priests do sigh;
Her young maidens are afflicted,[m] and she herself—bitterness is her lot!

---

w 4^{18} Adding *adversaries*, as the metre and context demand. This was probably omitted by a scribe because of its close similarity to the preceding and following words.

x 4^{18} Again correcting the text as the metre and context demand.

y 4^{20} A reference to the capture of King Zedekiah. Cf. Jer. 39^{4-8}.

z 4^{21} Lit., *daughter of Edom*.

a 4^{21} So Gk. The Heb. adds *Uz*. Cf. Gen. 36^{28}, but the reference is clearly to the Edomite occupation of southern Judah.

b 4^{21} *I. e.*, the cup of affliction.

c 4^{22} Lit., *is accomplished*.

d 4^{22} Lit., *daughter of Zion*.

e 4^{22} Lit., *daughter of Edom*.

§ 23 Cf., for date and authorship of this chap., Introd., p. 20. This poem has a rare tragic beauty and dramatic power. The poet's vision is not limited to Judah or the great catastrophe of 586 B.C., but he surveys broadly the fate that has overtaken his race. The problem uppermost in his mind is how Jehovah's favor may again be won. He declares that it is only through the confession of the nation's sins and appealing to Jehovah's mercy that the nation can win this favor. Accordingly, he puts in the mouth of the nation the confession of guilt and a plea for pity, thus putting in concrete form his counsel and message of consolation.

f 1^{1} The Heb. adds here *city;* but this destroys the symmetrical metre and has probably been transferred from the second line, where the metre requires it.

g 1^{2} *I. e.*, her treacherous allies, like Egypt.

h 1^{3} The poet apparently has in mind those who fled to Egypt and adjacent lands. Cf. Jer. 40^{11}.

i 1^{3} The reference is probably not to the toil under their Bab. masters, but to the pains of the siege and the events following the capture of Jerusalem as the sequel indicates.

j 1^{3} *I. e.*, permanent home.

k 1^{4} *I. e.*, because there are no more pilgrims going up to Jerusalem. Cf. Pss. 42 and 43.

l 1^{4} *I. e.*, the places of assembly, where private, public, and judicial questions were decided.

m 1^{4} Gk., *are carried away captive*.

[5]Her oppressors have gained the ascendency, her enemies are happy,
For Jehovah hath afflicted her sorely, for the multitude of her crimes;
Her little children have gone into captivity, in the presence of the oppressor.
[6]Gone from the daughter of Zion is all her splendor,
Her princes have become like harts, that find no pasture,
For they have fled without strength, in the presence of the pursuer.

She is guilty and despised

[7]Jerusalem calleth to remembrance, in the days of her affliction,[n]
How her people became subject to[o] the oppressor, with none to help her,
Her oppressors saw her and mocked, on account of her overthrow.[p]
[8]Jerusalem hath sinned deeply, so[q] that she has become an unclean thing,
All who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness,
She also is filled with sighs, and turneth backward.
[9]Her uncleanness clingeth to her skirts, she thinketh not of the future,
Therefore she hath fallen[r] most horribly, and is without a comforter.

Robbed and starved

Behold, O Jehovah, my affliction, for the foe is arrogant.[s]
[10]The conqueror hath laid his hand upon all her treasures,
Yea, she hath seen the heathen, as they enter her sanctuary,[t]
Concerning whom thou didst command, 'They shall not enter thy festal assembly.'
[11]All her people are filled with sighs, seeking food,
They give their treasures for food, to refresh themselves.

The nation's plea for pity because of the severity of Jehovah's judgment

Behold, O Jehovah, and observe how abject have I become!
[12]Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by? Observe and see,[u]
Whether there was ever sorrow like my sorrow, which has come upon me,
How Jehovah hath afflicted me in the day when his wrath was fierce!
[13]From on high hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevailed against them.
He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back;
He hath made me to become desolate and faint all the day.
[14]Watch is kept over my sins,[v] in his hand they are woven together,
As a yoke they come up upon my neck, he undermineth my strength,
The Lord hath delivered me into the hands of those who are irresistible.
[15]He hath despised all my mighty ones—the Lord in the midst of me,
He hath called a convocation[w] against me to crush my young men;

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[n] 1[7] A glossator has added what he thought was demanded by the context, *and of her miseries all her pleasant things which were from the days of old;* but these are contrary to the regular metrical and strophic structure of the poem.
[o] 1[7] Lit., *fell into the hand of.*
[p] 1[7] Following the Gk.
[q] 1[8] Lit., *therefore she has become an unclean thing.*
[r] 1[9] Lit., *gone down.*
[s] 1[9] Lit., *magnifies himself.*
[t] 1[10] Cf. Dt. 23[3] for the law against aliens.
[u] 1[12] A difficult line; a possible rendering would be, *O upon me, all ye who pass by, look and see.*
[v] 1[14] Making a slight correction in the later punctuation of this vs.
[w] 1[15] Lit., *solemn assembly.* This was usually for religious purposes, but here evidently to execute judgment.

The Lord hath trodden as in a wine-press[x] the[y] daughter of Judah.
16 Because of these things must I weep, mine eyes[z] shed tears,
For far from me is a comforter, who could revive my spirits;[a]
My children[b] are completely desolate, for the enemy hath prevailed.

17 Zion spreadeth out her hands, there is none[c] to comfort her; It is Jehovah's will
Jehovah hath commanded regarding Jacob, that his adversaries should surround him;[d]
Jerusalem indeed hath become an unclean thing in their eyes.

18 Jehovah, he is in the right, for I have rebelled against his command, The nation's confession of guilt
Yet hear ye, all ye peoples, and behold my sorrow;
My maidens, together with my young men, have gone into captivity.
19 I have called to those who love me, but they also have deceived me;
My priest and mine elders in the city expire from hunger,[e]
They have sought to find food for themselves, but they have found nothing.[f]
20 Behold, O Jehovah, for I am in distress, my soul is troubled;
My heart is disturbed within me,[g] for I have grievously rebelled;
Outside the sword bereaveth, within there is death.

21 Hear[h] how I pour forth sighs—there is none to comfort me! Prayer for vengeance
Mine enemies have all heard of my misfortune, they rejoice that thou hast done it;
Thou hast brought the day[i] that thou hast proclaimed because of all my sins,
22 Let all their wickedness come before thee, and may it be with them as with me;
Just as thou hast done to me,[j] do also to them,
Since many are my sighs and my heart is faint.

§ 24. Prayer of the Persecuted Survivors in the Judean Community, Lam. 5

Lam. 5 1 Remember, O Jehovah, what hath befallen us,[k] The great calamity a punishment for the nation's sins
Look and see our disgrace.

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x 1[15] The treading of the wine-press is also employed in Is. 63[2, 6] as a figure of judgment and complete destruction.

y 1[15] The Heb. adds *virgin*, but cf. [6] and 2[2, 5], where the present expression occurs without *virgin*, which is here probably a gloss.

z 1[16] So Gk. and Lat. The Heb. repeats *mine eye;* but this destroys the regular metre and is simply a scribal error.

a 1[16] Lit., *my soul.*

b 1[16] *I. e.*, the citizens of Judah.

c 1[17] *I. e.*, Judah's allies.

d 1[17] Or *those who encircle him should be his enemies.*

e 1[19] *From hunger* is not found in the text but is required by the metre and has probably been omitted as the result of a common scribal error.

f 1[19] The second half of the vs. has been retained in the Gk., Syr., and Arabic, together with the gloss, *that they might revive their spirits forever*, which has taken the place of the original in the Heb.

g 1[20] Lit., *inward parts;* according to the Hebrews the seat of the emotions.

h 1[21] Jehovah, not the passers by, as in [12], is addressed.

i 1[21] Cf. [15].

j 1[22] Reversing the two parts of this vs., as the metre demands.

§ 24 Cf., for date and interpretation, Introd., p. 20. This poem is an important historical source throwing light upon conditions in the Judean community during the first half of the Persian period. In conclusion it presents the question of why and how long Jehovah will seemingly forget his people. It is the same question that is uppermost in the literature of this period: Mal. 3, Job 3–31, and many pss., *e. g.*, 16 and 22.

k 5[1] Lit., *what is to us.*

2Our inheritance is turned over to aliens,[l]
Our homes belong to foreigners.
3We are orphans and fatherless,
Yea, our mothers are like widows.
4We drink our water for money,[m]
Our wood cometh to us by purchase.
5The yoke upon our necks harasseth us,[n]
We are weary, but find no rest.
6We have given the hand to the Egyptians,
And to the Assyrians, that we might be sated with food.[o]
7Our fathers sinned and are no more,[p]
While we must bear their guilt.

Pitiable fate of the survivors

8Slaves[q] have dominion over us,
With none to deliver from their hand.
9We get our bread at the peril of our lives,
Because of the sword of the wilderness.[r]
10Our skin becometh hot like an oven,
Because of the glowing heat of famine.
11They ravish the women in Zion,
The virgins in the cities of Judah.
12Princes are hanged up by the hand,
The person of the elders is not honored.
13The young men bear up the mill,
And the children stumble under the wood.

The tragic contrast with Judah's former prosperity

14The elders have ceased from the gate,
The young men from their music.
15The joy of our heart hath ceased,
Our dance is turned into mourning.
16The crown hath fallen from our head;
Woe to us! for we have sinned.
17For this reason our heart is faint,
For these causes our eyes are dim;
18For the mountain of Zion is desolate;
The jackals walk over it.

Appeal to Jehovah to restore his people

19Thou art enthroned forever,[s] O Jehovah,
Thy throne is from generation to generation.

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[l] 5[2] *I. e.*, the Edomites.
[m] 5[4] *I. e.*, not having any title to the land or the cisterns, we must purchase our water.
[n] 5[5] Correcting two scribal errors.
[o] 5[6] This vs. is obscure. It is not clear whether the reference is to the past experience of the nation or to the present fortunes of the exiles. In the latter case the reference to Assyria, which fell in 605–4 B.C., is unexpected, although even in post-exilic literature Assyria continued to figure as the great Eastern power.
[p] 5[7] For this popular proverb, cf. Jer. 31[29], Ezek. 18[1], II Kgs. 23[26], 24[3].
[q] 5[8] The reference may be to the Bab. governors or to the local landowners. Cf. Nehemiah's reference to Tobiah as the Ammonite slave, Neh. 2[19].
[r] 5[9] *I. e.*, sudden Bedouin attacks, which have ever been the terror of the inhabitants of Palestine when the local government has been weak.
[s] 5[19] Cf. also Pss. 45[6], 102[12].

20Why dost thou forget us forever,
And forsake us these many years?
21Restore us,[t] O Jehovah, and we will be restored;
Renew our days as of old.
22Or hast thou completely rejected us,
Art thou very wroth against us?

§ 25. A Jewish Patriot's Meditation on Jehovah's Leadership of His People, Lam. 3

Jehovah's affliction of his servant in the past

Lam. 3 1I am the man who hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.
2He hath led me and caused me to walk in darkness, without light.
3Surely against me he hath turned his hand all the day.
4My flesh and my skin hath he wasted; he hath broken my bones.
5Against me he hath builded and enclosed me with bitterness[u] and weariness.
6He hath made me to dwell in dark places, like those long dead.
7He hath walled me about so that I cannot go forth; he hath made heavy my chain.
8Though I cry and call for help, he shutteth out my prayer.
9He hath walled up my ways with hewn stone; he hath twisted my paths.
10He is to me as a bear lying in wait, as a lion in lurking places.
11He hath turned aside my steps and mangled me;[v] he hath made me forlorn.
12He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.
13Through my vitals he drove shafts,[w] the sons of his quiver.
14To all peoples[x] I am become a derision, and their song all the day.
15He hath filled me to the full with bitterness; he hath sated me with gall.
16He hath broken my teeth with gravel; he hath heaped[y] me with ashes.
17And he hath deprived my soul of its peace;[z] I forgot prosperity,
18And I said: 'My strength is gone, and my hope in Jehovah.'
19The remembrance[a] of mine affliction and my bitterness is wormwood and gall,
20My soul doth ever remember them and is bowed down within me.

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[t] 5[21] So the parallel in Jer. 31[18] and the demands of the context. The Heb. adds *to thee.*

§ 25 For the probable date and origin of this poem, cf. Introd. p. 20. This poetic monologue presents a problem that also arises in connection with many pss. of the Psalter. Does the speaker speak for himself or for his nation? The portrait in the first part of the poem has many points of contact with the suffering servant of Jehovah in Is. 42–53 or of Ps. 22. As in those familiar passages, the picture of suffering is superlative and transcends that of the ordinary individual. It is an epitome of Israel's woes in the years following 586 B.C. If we follow the Syr. and certain Heb. MSS. of [14] the conviction grows that we have here a collective description of the nation's woes, into which the poet has woven the results of his own observation and personal experience. At certain points he turns preacher, as in [21-39], and sets forth certain fundamental spiritual truths with rare power and winsomeness. In [40-47] he throws off the individual form of address and speaks to and in behalf of the nation. The poem contains many passages of great literary and spiritual beauty.

[u] 3[5] Lit., *gall.* The exact meaning of this vs. is not certain. Many would revise fundamentally.

[v] 3[11] *I. e.*, carrying on the figure of a ravenous wild beast.

[w] 3[13] *I. e.*, shafts from his quiver. This is a characteristic Heb. idiom.

[x] 3[14] So Syr. and many MSS. Heb., *my people.*

[y] 3[16] Lit., *made me bend under the burden.*

[z] 3[17] So Gk. Heb., *thou hast.* Lit., *he hath caused my soul* (*i. e.*, me) *to reject peace* (or *welfare*).

[a] 3[19] Punctuating the Heb. slightly differently than in the traditional text which reads *remember.*

His goodness to those who patiently trust him

21This[b] I recall to mind; therefore I have hope:
22Jehovah's lovingkindnesses do not cease,[c] for they never fail.
23His mercies are new every morning; great is his[d] faithfulness.
24I said,[e] 'Jehovah is my portion; therefore will I hope in him.'
25Jehovah is good to those who wait for him, to one[f] who seeketh him.

His yoke is placed on men for a loving purpose

26It is good quietly to hope for the salvation of Jehovah.
27It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
28Let him sit alone and be silent, when Jehovah hath laid it upon him.
29Let him put his mouth in the dust;[g] perchance there may be hope.
30Let him give his cheek to the smiter; let him be filled with reproach,
31For the Lord will not cast off forever the children of men.[h]
32Though he grieve, he will have compassion according to the greatness of his lovingkindness,
33For he doth not willingly[i] afflict nor grieve mankind.

His judgments are just

34The crushing under foot of all the prisoners of earth,
35The wresting of the rights of a man before the Almighty,
36The subverting a man in his cause, doth the Lord not see?
37Who is it that saith, and it is, when the Lord commandeth it not?
38Out of the mouth of the Almighty doth there not come evil and good?
39Why should a mortal complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

Call to national confession and petition for mercy

40Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to Jehovah.
41Let us lift our hearts[j] with our hands to God in the heavens.
42'We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast not pardoned.
43Thou hast veiled thy face in wrath; thou hast slain without pity.
44Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that no prayer could pass through.
45Thou hast made us an offscouring and refuse in the midst of the peoples.
46All our enemies have opened their mouths wide against us.
47Terror and destruction are upon us, devastation and ruin.'

The cry of woe and distress

48Mine eye runs down with streams of water, for the wreck of my people,
49Mine eye pours down unceasingly, without any respite,
50Until Jehovah look down and behold my sorrow from heaven,
51For he affecteth my soul, because of the woes of my city.[k]
52They have hunted me like a bird; they who are mine enemies without cause,
53In the dungeon they have cut off my life, and have cast a stone upon me.[l]

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[b] 3:21 The *this* refers to the statement regarding Jehovah's goodness that follows.
[c] 3:22 So one Heb. MS., Syr., and Targ.
[d] 3:23 Heb., *thy*.
[e] 3:24 A scribe, destroying the metre, has introduced the longer idiom, *my soul saith*, *i. e.*, I myself say.
[f] 3:25 Lit., *soul*, equivalent to the Eng., *one* or *person*.
[g] 3:29 *I. e.*, better humble his pride to the ground or fill his mouth with dust than speak resentfully of Jehovah's providence.
[h] 3:31 The metre and the parallel in 33 indicate that a word or two has been dropped out of the text which must be supplied.
[i] 3:33 Lit., *from the heart*.
[j] 3:41 So Gk., Syr., and Lat. Heb., *heart*.
[k] 3:51 This vs. has suffered badly in transmission. The Heb. reads *all the daughters of my people*. The reconstruction given above is only conjectural.
[l] 3:53 *I. e.*, cast me, like Jeremiah, into a dungeon to die.

54 Waters flowed over my head; I said, 'I am lost.' *The divine deliverance*
55 I called on thy name, O Jehovah, from the lowest dungeon.
56 Thou heardest my voice; oh close not thine ear[m] to my cry!
57 On the day that I called upon thee thou drewest near; thou saidst, 'Fear not.'
58 O Lord, thou didst plead my cause;[n] thou redeemedst my life.

59 O Jehovah, thou hast seen my wrong; vindicate my cause. *Concluding appeal for vindication and vengeance*
60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their devices against me;
61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O Jehovah, and all their devices against me,[o]
62 The utterances of my foes, and their mutterings against me each day.
63 Behold their sitting down and their rising up; I am the object of their song.[p]
64 Thou wilt repay them, O Jehovah, for the work of their hands.
65 Thou wilt give them blindness of vision,[q] thy curse upon them.
66 Thou wilt pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under the heavens.[r]

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[m] 3[56] Heb. adds *to my breathing*. The metre and the variations of the VSS. leave little doubt that this is a later interpolation.
[n] 3[58] Lit., *thou didst plead the cause of my soul;* but *soul* here, as usually, means physical life.
[o] 3[61] The repetition of the same second member in [60], [61] is probably due to a scribal error, although it may have been introduced in the original for the sake of emphasis.
[p] 3[63] *I. e.*, songs of mockery.
[q] 3[65] Lit., *blindness of heart;* but here, as usually, the heart stands for mental power.
[r] 3[66] So certain Gk. MSS. Heb. adds *of Jehovah*, destroying the metre and directness of the curse.

SONGS OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE

I. A ROYAL MARRIAGE SONG

Ps. 45

II. A COLLECTION OF ANTE-NUPTIAL SONGS

Sg. of Sgs. 1^2–3^5

III. WEDDING-SONGS

Sg. of Sgs. 3^6–8^{14}

SONGS OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE

I

A ROYAL MARRIAGE SONG

Ps. 45

§ 26. The King's Marriage, Ps. 45

Exordium

Ps. 45 1 My mind is inspired[a] with a theme that is noble,
As I myself utter my poem[b] concerning a king,
My tongue is as the pen of a scribe who is skilled.[c]

The king's beauty and grace

2 Thou art surpassingly fair, above the children of men;
Over thy lips hath grace been poured;
Therefore Jehovah[d] hath blessed thee forever.

His prowess

3 On thy thigh gird thy sword, O hero,
In thy splendor and majesty go on, and prosper;
4 For the cause of truth and right, rule on,
And wonderful deeds thy right hand will show thee.

Songs of Love and Marriage.—Cf., for general discussion, Introd, pp. 22–29.

§ 26 Later generations gave to this ps. a messianic interpretation, but it is an unmistakable example of a Hebrew court song. It was evidently written on the occasion of a royal marriage, and was probably sung by the court poet himself during the public festivities. In the first part of the poem the king is addressed, $^{2-9}$, and his personal beauty and prowess and the permanence and splendor of his rule are glowingly portrayed. Vs. ^{9} contains an allusion to the royal bride and is followed in the second half of the poem, $^{10-17}$, by an address to the queen in which her new duties, the splendor of her attire and of her train, and the hope that she may have noble offspring are naïvely but effectively set forth. The poem is introduced by an elaborate exordium, ^{1}, which is doubtless typical of Hebrew court usage. Similar elaborate introductions are found at the beginning of the royal Balaam oracles in Nu. 24^{3} and also in II Sam. 24^{1-3}. The atmosphere of this ps. is evidently that of the joyous days before the Babylonian exile. Although this hymn may later have been regularly sung at royal marriages, there is little doubt that a definite theme and occasion were originally in the poet's mind. It is, of course, possible only conjecturally to identify the king addressed. As Briggs has pointed out (*Pss.*, I, 384, 385), the description of the king in $^{3-5}$ fits remarkably well Jehu, the warrior who unsheathed his sword in behalf of the true worship of Jehovah, with his own right hand pierced the heart of his foes, and by a series of bold acts established himself on the throne of northern Israel. The reference to *ivory palaces* in ^{8} points also to the northern kingdom and to the days following Ahab, who, according to I Kgs. 22^{39}, first reared such a structure. Amos also, in his denunciation of conditions in northern Israel, apparently alludes in $6^{8, 9}$ to the singing of songs—probably similar to the present one—*to the accompaniment of musical instruments*. It is possible that this hymn was sung later, at the marriage of some king of Judah, as, for example, Josiah. The description of the king is doubtless due in part to the patriotic imagination and adulation which are prominent in the court songs and in the royal portraits that have come down from the court poets and artists of ancient Egypt and Babylonia.

[a] 45^{1} Lit., *is astir.*

[b] 45^{1} Lit., *reciting my work.*

[c] 45^{1} Cf. Ezra 7^{6}, *Ezra . . . a scribe skilled in the law.*

[d] 45^{2} Heb., *God.*

5 Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's foes,[e]
O hero,[f] under thee nations shall fall.

Permanence and splendor of his rule

6 Thy throne[g] will stand forever and ever.
The sceptre of thy dominion is a sceptre of righteousness.
7 Thou lovest the right, and hatest wickedness,
Therefore Jehovah[h] thy God hast anointed thee
With oil of joy above thy fellows,
8 From[i] thy garments myrrh, and aloes and cassia,
From ivory palaces the music of strings delight thee.
9 Daughters of kings are among thy jewels,
At thy right hand standeth the queen in gold of Ophir.

Counsel to the queen

10 O daughter, hear and see and give ear,
Forget thy people and the house of thy father,
11 For the king longeth ever for thy beauty;
To him be subject, for he indeed is thy lord.
12 With a gift the daughters of Tyre shall do homage,[j]
The richest of the nations will court thy face.

Her attire and her attendants

13 In all her glory the king's daughter is within,
Her clothing is inwrought with precious gold.
14 In embroidered garments she is brought to the king;
The maidens in her train, her companions, are brought in to her.[k]
15 To her they are brought in with gladness and rejoicing,
Into the palace of the king they are led.

Prayer for her offspring and fame

16 To the place of thy fathers may thy sons succeed,
Throughout the land thou wilt make them princes.
17 I will cause thy name to be remembered for all ages,[l]
Therefore nations shall praise thee forever and ever.

---

[e] 45:5 In the Heb. the last three words have been transferred to the end of the vs., but the context requires their restoration to their logical setting.

[f] 45:5 So Gk. This word is omitted in the Heb., probably as a result of the general confusion of the text. Possibly this last line is a scribal addition. If so, this would explain its present awkward position in the text.

[g] 45:6 Heb., *God;* but the king is the one addressed. The error clearly came because when a later editor changed *Jehovah* to *God* he mistook the similar Heb. words *will be* and *Jehovah*.

[h] 45:7 Heb., *God;* but this is due to the editor who changed the original, *Jehovah*.

[i] 45:8 Following the Gk. Heb., *all*.

[j] 45:12 So Gk. The Heb. is badly corrupt.

[k] 45:14 So the MSS. supported by the context. Heb., *to thee*.

[l] 45:17 Lit., *generations*.

II

A COLLECTION OF ANTE-NUPTIAL SONGS

Sg. of Sgs. 1²-3⁵

§ 27. The Bride's Protestation of Her Love and of Her Desire to Be with Her Lover, Sg. of Sgs. 1¹⁻⁸

Sg. of Sgs. 1 ²Let him[a] kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; — Bride's apostrophe to her absent lover
For thy love is better than wine.
³Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance,
Thy name is as an ointment poured out;
Therefore do the maidens love thee.

⁴Draw me. [Attendants]: We will run after thee. — A second address to her lover, echoed by her attendants
[Bride]: Bring[b] me, O king, into thy chambers.
[Attendants]: We will be glad and rejoice in thee;
We will extol thy love more than wine.
[Bride]: Yea, rightly do they love thee.

⁵I am browned. [Attendants]: Yea,[c] but comely. — Dialogue between bride and her attendants
[Bride]: O daughters of Jerusalem, I am like the tents of Kedar.
[Attendants]: Nay, like the curtains of Solomon.
⁶[Bride]: Look not upon me, for I am browned,
Because the sun has burned me.
My brothers were angry with me,[d]

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§ 27 For general discussion of the Sg. of Sgs., cf. Introd., pp. 22-29. The scene of this soliloquy and dialogue is evidently the home of the bride. It marks the beginning of the wedding festivities for which she is apparently preparing. Surrounded by her girl friends, who, in keeping with the dramatic customs of the Oriental wedding, are called *the daughters of Jerusalem*, she throws aside the reserve which shuts the mouth of every unbetrothed maiden in the East and protests her love for her future husband. The scene corresponds very closely to the ante-nuptial parade songs recited by the bride and her attendants in the modern Palestinian wedding, as reported by Dalmann and already quoted. Cf. p. 25. Similarly in the next song the bridegroom himself is introduced. The chief difference between the biblical and the modern songs is that here, as throughout the Sg. of Sgs., the author with rare effectiveness makes the bride the chief speaker. In these poems we have not mere stereotyped wedding refrains but genuine love-songs that recall the similar poems of Theocritus and of the east-Jordan poet Meleager, who wrote in classic Gk. Cf. *Anthol. Palatina*, V, 160. True, pure love breathes through them—the love that a betrothed bride should properly feel for her future husband. The purpose of these two opening songs, as the closing refrain in 3⁵ possibly suggests, was to awaken such a love in the heart of the bride.

[a] 1² Certain interpreters would change the Heb. in this line so as to make it a direct address as in the second line. It is more natural, however, to interpret it as it is and to regard it as the poet's index that the lover is not present except in the heart of the bride. She feels his presence, however, so strongly that her words naturally pass from the third to the second person in the succeeding line.

[b] 1⁴ So Syr. Possibly the Heb. represents the original, for it retains the third person as in ²ᵃ.

[c] 1⁵ Many interpreters assign all of this vs. to the bride, but there is an unmistakable element of contrast which strongly suggests the second half of the first two lines were spoken by the daughters of Jerusalem, to whom the bride addresses her words. Her modesty as revealed throughout the book renders it exceedingly difficult to place the closing sentence in each of these lines upon her lips. Some commentators, recognizing the difficulty, revise the text in the second half of the second line so as to read *Salama* instead of *Solomon*.

[d] 1⁶ This reference to her brothers is further illuminated by ⁸ and 8⁸.

They made me keeper of the vineyards;
But mine own vineyard[e] I have not kept.

The bride's longing for her lover

7 Tell me, thou whom I love,
Where thou feedest thy flock,[f]
And makest it rest at noontide.
Why must I be like a wanderer[g]
Among the flocks of thy comrades?

Reply of her attendant maidens

8 If thou know not, O fairest of women,[h]
Follow in the footsteps of the flock,
And feed thy kids by the shepherds' tents.

§ 28. Dialogue between the Bride and Her Lover, Sg. of Sgs. 1[9]–2[7]

Lover's address to his bride

Sg. of Sgs. 1 9 I have compared thee, O my friend, to a[i] steed in Pharaoh's chariots;
10 Thy cheeks are comely with spangles,[j] thy neck with jewels.[k]
11 We will make thee spangles of gold, with studs of silver.

Bride's declaration of her love

12 While the king sat on his divan[l] my spikenard sent forth its fragrance.
13 My beloved is to me a bundle of myrrh that lieth between my breasts;
14 My beloved is to me a cluster of henna flowers[m] in the vineyards of Engedi.

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[e] 1[6] *I. e.*, probably her own beauty.

[f] 1[7] The exact interpretation of this and the following vs. is not clear. Certain interpreters regard it as secondary. The songs as a whole imply that the girl's lover was a shepherd. Her words are probably intended to express her passionate desire to be with him at all times.

[g] 1[7] So Syr., Sym., and Lat. This reading is supported by the context. The traditional Heb. reading, *veiled*, is due to the mistaken transposition of two letters. The meaning evidently is, Why should I be like a vagrant wanton, going from flock to flock in quest of my lover?

[h] 1[8] It is not entirely clear who utters this vs. In the light of the immediately preceding context, however, it is probably the bride's attendants.

§ 28 The sudden change of metre from the three to the five beat measure suggests that here a new song begins. The lover, who was apparently absent from the preceding dialogue, speaks, describing in characteristically Oriental yet reserved terms the beauty of his bride to be. To-day the Arab poet can pay no higher tribute to the beauties of his wife than to liken her to his stately steed. Vs. [12] introduces a corresponding three-line stanza in which the bride, in exquisitely delicate terms, responds by describing how precious to her is the love which she cherishes for her lover. The next stanza contains a beautiful dialogue abounding in concrete yet felicitous comparisons in which the bride protests that she is but a simple flower of the plains. Her lover with restraint—for he still addresses her as his friend rather than bride—but with marvellous felicity, declares that though she is but a simple peasant girl she is far more beautiful than her attendant friends and that she is well fitted to adorn the palace in which their shepherd life is to be spent, for that palace is the greensward and the pillared forests. Each with rare aptness takes up and carries on the figure suggested by the other. In the concluding stanzas the bride develops the figure of the apple tree and, with reserve and delicacy, expresses her eagerness for the consummation of their approaching marriage. The concluding vs. contains the refrain three times repeated in the poem, cf. 3[5], 5[8], and addressed to her attendants. It is evidently intended to emphasize the importance of letting love grow spontaneously with that simplicity and freedom of which the gazelles and the fallow deer that leap over the plain are the fitting symbol.

[i] 1[9] Heb., *my*.

[j] 1[10] Possibly the Heb. is to be interpreted plaits (of hair). It describes that which was flattened. The next line, however, favors the reading spangles which perhaps corresponded to the coins which are worn across her forehead and hanging down on her cheeks by the modern Palestinian bride.

[k] 1[10] The Heb. word is found only here and probably means *strings of beads* or *of jewels*.

[l] 1[12] Lit., *something round*. The reference is either to a table or a divan.

[m] 1[14] Fragrant whitish flowers growing in clusters, like grapes.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE BRIDE AND HER LOVER

15 Behold thou art fair,[n] my friend, thine eyes are as doves. — Lover
16 Fair art thou, my beloved;[o] and our couch is green. — Bride
17 The beams of our house are cedars, our rafters cypresses. — Lover
2 1 I am a crocus flower on the plain of Sharon, a lily of the valley. — Bride
2 As a lily among thistles so indeed is my friend among the daughters. — Lover
3 As the apple tree[p] among the trees of the woods, so is my beloved among the sons. — Bride

Soliloquy of the bride addressed in part to her attendants

Gladly I sit in his shadow,
And his fruit is sweet to my taste.
4 To the house of wine let him bring me,
And let his banner above me be love.
5 Stay me with cakes of raisins,
With apples revive my strength;
For I am sick because of love.
6 Let his left hand be under my head,
Let his right hand embrace me.

Refrain

7 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up nor awaken love until it please.

§ 29. The Bride's Reminiscences of a Recent Visit of Her Lover, Sg. of Sgs. 2[8]–3[5]

Monologue of the bride regarding her lover

Sg. of Sgs. 2 8 Hark, my beloved! Behold he comes,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.[q]
9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young hind.
Behold he stands behind our wall;
Now he is looking in the window,
While I glance out[r] through the lattice.

His love-song

10 My beloved spoke and said to me,
'Rise up, my fair one,[s] and come away.
11 For, see, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
12 The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of singing is come,
And the voice of the turtle-dove is heard,[t]

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[n] 1[15] Through a mistake of the scribe the words *behold thou art fair* have been repeated in the Heb. and destroy the metre.

[o] 1[16] As in [15] in the Heb. the thought of the first clause has been repeated: *verily thou art lovely*.

[p] 2[3] The figure of the apple tree, with its beautiful flowers and its grateful shade and its pleasant fruit, is especially felicitous. The figure is carried on in the soliloquy of the bride which follows.

[q] 2[8] It is probable that the poet for emphasis purposely opened this most beautiful of spring-time songs with a four-beat couplet.

[r] 2[9] Slightly revising the Heb.

[s] 2[10] The Lat. adds *my dove* in the first part and the Gk. in the latter part of this line, showing the tendency to expand which has probably led a later editor to introduce *my love* from [13], thereby destroying the measure.

[t] 2[12] *In our land* is added.

[13]The figtree ripens her figs,
And the vines[u] give forth their fragrance.

His invitation to her to come with him

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away,
[14]O my dove, in the rocky clefts, in the covert of the cliff,
Let me behold thy countenance, let me hear thy voice;
For sweet is thy voice and beautiful thy countenance.'

Her response that she would receive him at eventide

[15]Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes,
That spoil the vineyards, when our vineyards are in bloom.[v]
[17]Until the day becomes cool, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a gazelle,
Or like a young hind on the mountains of spices.[w]

Her passionate longing and quest for her lover

3 [1]By night on my bed I sought him whom I love;
I sought him earnestly, but I found him not.[x]
[2]I said, 'I will rise now, and go about the city,
In the streets and in the broad ways I will seek him whom I love.'
I sought him earnestly, but I found him not.
[3]The watchmen who go about the city found me;
To whom I said, 'Saw ye him whom I love?'[y]
[4]It was but a little after I passed from them, when I found him;
I held him whom I love, and would not let him go,
Until I brought him to my mother's house, to the chamber of her who conceived me.[z]

Refrain

[5]I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
That you stir not up nor awaken love until it please.

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[u] 2[13] A scribe has added, destroying the metre, the explanatory words *in bloom*. Its lack of syntactical connection with the context reveals its secondary character.

[v] 2[15] Heb. adds *My beloved is mine, and I am his, as he feeds among the lilies*. This was probably introduced from 6[3] where it fits rather than interrupts the context.

[w] 2[17] Restoring from the parallel passage in 8[14]. Heb., *Bether*. This makes no sense.

[x] 3[1] Possibly this line was introduced by mistake from [2].

[y] 3[4] Adding *him* and joining *him whom I love* (lit., *him whom my soul loves*) to the next line as the metre demands.

[z] 3[4] By many this awkward line is regarded as a scribal expansion. Cf. 8[2] with which it is apparently inconsistent.

III

WEDDING-SONGS

Sg. of Sgs. 3^{6}–8^{14}

§ 30. The Approach of the Bridegroom and His Wedding Address to His Bride, Sg. of Sgs. 3^{6}–5^{1}

Query of the people

Sg. of Sgs. 3 6 Who is this coming up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and incense, with all the powders of the merchant?
Behold, it is the litter of Solomon![a]

Reply that it is the bridegroom approaching with his friends

7 Sixty brave warriors are about it, of the warriors of Israel,
8 All of them handle the sword and are expert in war;
Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear at night.
9 King Solomon made himself a palanquin of the wood of Lebanon;
10 He made its pillars of silver, its bottom of gold,
Its seat of purple, its midst adorned with love.

Command to the bride's attendants

11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,[b] and behold King Solomon,
With the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him on the day of his espousals.[c]

Bridegroom's description of the bride's beauty

4 1 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair;
Thine eyes are like doves peeping from[d] behind thy veil.
Thy hair is as a flock of goats that stream down from Mount Gilead.[e]

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§ 30 The opening stanzas of this song introduce the bridegroom advancing with his attendants to claim his bride. In keeping with the Palestinian wedding customs, he is spoken of as King Solomon; his attendants are described as mighty warriors corresponding to the royal bodyguard. In imagination he is clad and attended with royal splendor. It is not clear who is speaking in the second stanza. It may possibly have been the bride, but more probably it was the people or some one of the wedding-guests who answered the question of the people and called the attention of the daughters of Jerusalem (the bride's attendants) to the approach of the bridegroom on this his wedding-day. The scene is evidently before the home of the bride and the hour is in the early evening, when the Oriental wedding festivities began.

The stanzas which follow represent the bridegroom's praise of his bride. It corresponds to the *wasf* of the bridegroom in the modern Palestinian weddings. The description is characteristically concrete and typically Oriental. It begins with praise of her eyes and hair. A description of her bodily charms then follows. It was the one occasion when, in the social life of the East, such a description was deemed proper and appropriate. Its spirit, however, is chaste. It is followed by a highly poetic passage in which the bridegroom requests the bride to leave her home and become his wife. It is significant that, whereas in $4^{1, 7}$ the bridegroom employs as earlier the more formal term *friend* in addressing the object of his affections, in [9] and [10] he for the first time uses the term *bride*. The bride is described under the figure of a garden, even as in modern Arabic poetry. Using the same figure, and with great delicacy, the bride in [16] expresses her willingness to enter into the marriage relation. The song ends with an address to the assembled guests by the bridegroom. This corresponds to the refrain in which the bride addressed her attendants at the conclusion of the earlier songs.

[a] 3^{6} The brevity of this line is probably in order to make it more impressive.

[b] 3^{11} The Heb. adds *daughters of Zion*, but this destroys the metre and is evidently a scribal duplicate of the term *daughters of Jerusalem*, which, in the current division of the vss., is connected with [10] and introduced by *from*.

[c] 3^{11} Heb. adds *in the day of the gladness of his heart;* this, however, is probably but a scribal duplicate of the preceding phrase *in the day of his espousals*.

[d] 4^{1} Supplying the verb implied by the preposition.

[e] 4^{1} So certain Heb. MSS. and Gk. Heb., *along the side of Mount Gilead*. The goats of Palestine are, as a rule, black, and the poet's figure describes the bride's black, waving locks.

2Thy teeth are like a flock of shorn[f] ewes coming up from the washing,
Every one of which hath twins, and none is bereaved.
3Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy mouth is comely,
Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate[g] behind thy veil.
4Thy neck is like the tower of David built for an armory,
On which hang a thousand bucklers, all the shields of the warriors.[h]
5Thy two[i] breasts are like two fawns that are twins of a gazelle.[j]
7Thou art altogether fair, my friend; verily thou art spotless.

His invitation to come away

8Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,[k] from Lebanon,
From the top of Amana, my sister, from the top of Senir and Hermon,[l]
From the den of lions, from the mount where the leopards prowl.[m]

His description of the bride's charms

9Thou hast captured my heart, O my sister, my bride[n]
With one glance of thine eyes, with one chain on[o] thy neck.[p]
10How fair is thy love, O my sister, my bride!
How much better is thy love than wine,
And the fragrance of thine oils than all kinds of spices!
11Thy lips, O my bride, drop as the honeycomb,
Honey and milk are under thy tongue;
And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.
12A garden enclosed is my sister, my bride;
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
13Thy shoots are a pomegranate park, with precious fruits:
Henna with spikenard plants, spikenard and saffron,
14Calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense,
Myrrhs and aloes, with all the chief spices.
15A fountain of the gardens, a well of living waters,
And flowing streams from Lebanon art thou.[q]

The bride's consent

16Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south;
Blow upon my garden that its spices may flow out;
Let my beloved enter his garden, and eat his precious fruits.

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f 4^{2} *I. e.*, pearly white, symmetrical, and complete.
g 4^{3} The reference is to the delicate veining.
h 4^{4} The meaning is exceedingly doubtful. The current translation given above is based on implications of the context. The reference is probably to the adornments and especially to the golden spangles referred to in 1^{11}.
i 4^{5} Possibly *two*, which is superfluous in the Heb., is due to a scribal repetition.
j 4^{5} Heb. adds *which feed among the lilies;* but this makes no sense and is, without reasonable doubt, a scribal insertion from 2^{16}. The same scribe has apparently introduced from the same context, 2^{17}, the vs.:

Until the day be cool and the shadows flee away,
I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, to the hill of frankincense.

Vs. ^{7} is the natural sequel of ^{5}, while the inserted vs. ^{6} is out of harmony with the bridegroom's invitation in ^{8}.
k 4^{8} So Gk., Lat., and Syr. Cf. ^{9}. Heb. repeats *with me*.
l 4^{8} This vs. suggests the ancient form of marriage by capture and flight.
m 4^{8} Lit., *mount of the leopards*.
n 4^{9} Heb. repeats *thou hast captured my heart*.
o 4^{9} Lit., *of thy neck; i. e.*, the necklace on thy fair neck.
p 4^{9} Possibly the original read:

Thou hast captured my heart, with one of thine eyes
Thou hast captured my heart with one charm on thy neck.

q 4^{15} Supplying the words required to complete the measure and thought.

5 [1]I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice,
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey,
I have drunk my wine with my milk.
Eat, O friends; drink,
Drink abundantly, O friends.

Bridegroom's delight in the joys of marriage

§ 31. **The Bride's Praise of the Bridegroom,** Sg. of Sgs. 5^2–6^3

Sg. of Sgs. 5 [2]I was asleep, but my mind was awake:
Hark! My beloved is knocking!
[He said], 'Open to me, my sister,
My friend, my dove, my undefiled,
For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.'
[3][But I said], 'I have put off my garment;
How shall I put it on?
I have washed my feet;
How shall I soil them?'
[4]My beloved took his hand away from the latch.[r]
Then my heart was moved for him,
[5]I rose up to open to my beloved;
And my hands dropped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.
[6]I myself opened to my beloved;
But my beloved had turned away, was gone.
My soul had failed me when he spoke,
I sought him, but could not find him,
I called him, but he gave me no answer.
[7]The watchmen who go about the city
Found me, they smote me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls took from me my mantle.

Bride's reminiscence of another visit of her lover

[8]I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If ye find my beloved, then tell him
That I indeed am sick because of love!

Refrain

[9]What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?
What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so adjure us?

Their request that she describe her beloved

§ 31 This song contains the bride's impassioned description of her love for the bridegroom and of his physical charms. It corresponds to the bridegroom's description of her charms in the preceding song. Like the similar song in 2^8–3^5, it is in part a monologue. Its object is evidently to indicate the intensity of the love which burns in her heart. Her description of her lover which follows is provoked by the question of her attendants. The bridegroom does not appear in person in this song until the close. As in the second song, 2^8–3^5, she is alone with her attendants in whose presence her frank expression of her love is appropriate. While her concrete description of the physical characteristics of the bridegroom does not appeal to Western taste, it is thoroughly chaste and full of Oriental charm.

[r] 5^4 Lit., *hole* of the door through which one reached to lift the latch.

Her description of his charms

10 My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand;
11 His head is finest gold, his locks are[s] black as a raven,
12 His eyes are like doves beside the streams of water,
Washed with milk, well set, and full orbed.[t]
13 His cheeks are a bed of spices; banks of sweet herbs;[u]
His lips are lilies, dropping liquid myrrh.
14 His hands are rings of gold set with beryl,[v]
His body is ivory work overlaid with sapphires.
15 His legs are marble pillars, set upon golden sockets.
His appearance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.
16 His mouth[w] is most sweet; yea he is altogether lovely.
This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Effect upon her attendants

6 1 Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women?
Whither hath thy beloved turned, that we may seek him with thee?

Her coy reply

2 My beloved is gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices,
In order that he may feed in the gardens, and there gather lilies.
3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, as he feeds among the lilies.

§ 32. Praise of the Bride and Her Public Avowal of Her Love, Sg. of Sgs. 6^{4}–8^{4}

Bridegroom's apostrophe to his bride

Sg. of Sgs. 6 4 Thou art fair, O my friend, as Tirzah![x]
Comely as Jerusalem, formidable as an army with banners!
5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they cause me alarm.
Thy hair is as a flock of goats that stream down from Mount Gilead.[y]
6 Thy teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes, which come up from the washing,
Every one of which hath twins, and none is bereaved.
7 Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate behind thy veil.[z]
8 Solomon had sixty queens and eighty concubines.[a]
9 My dove, my undefiled, is but one!
She is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her who bore her.

---

[s] 5^{11} The Heb. adds a doubtful word usually translated *bushy*, but it is probably secondary.

[t] 5^{12} The exact meaning of the Heb. is not known. The translation is based on the root meanings of the Heb. words.

[u] 5^{13} Lit., *balsam*.

[v] 5^{14} Lit., *the Tarshish stone*.

[w] 5^{16} Or, revising the text slightly, *Behold he is*.

§ 32 This song, chiefly devoted to a description of the charms of the bride, corresponds to the preceding description of the bridegroom. As in the third song, 3^{6}–5^{1}, the bridegroom advanced in regal state, so now the bride advances. She is first addressed by the bridegroom. The opening stanza is largely a duplicate of the bridegroom's praise of the bride in 4^{1}–5^{1}. Possibly it is secondary, and the original song, like the corresponding one in 3^{6-11}, began with a question of the assembled guests. Here the bride evidently appears before the guests, clad in all her finery, and possibly brandishing a sword, as in the corresponding scene in the modern east-Jordan wedding ceremony, and dances, while they chant her charms. It is significant that the remarkably free description of her physical beauty in 7^{1-5} begins with her feet and concludes with a reference to her tresses, in which the king, *i. e.*, the bridegroom, is held captive. The brief dialogue between the bridegroom and bride at the end apparently concludes the public wedding ceremony.

[x] 6^{4} Tirzah, for a brief time after the death of Solomon, the capital of northern Israel, is probably to be identified with the modern *Teiasir*, twelve miles northeast of Samaria. It stood on a commanding height in the midst of fertile fields.

[y] 6^{5} For the same figure, cf. $4^{1, 2}$.

[z] 6^{7} Cf. 4^{3}.

[a] 6^{8} Following Budde (*Komm.* 32) in emending the text in the light of 8^{11}. A scribe familiar with the statement in I Kgs. 11^{3} that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines has added *and virgins without number*.

The daughters of Jerusalem[b] saw her and called her blessed;
Yea, the queens and the concubines, they likewise praised her.

Query of the guests

10 Who is she that looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun, formidable as an army with banners?

Bride's modest reply

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to see the green plants of the valley,
To see if the vines were budding and the pomegranates were in flower.
12 Before I was aware, my desire put me beside the chariots of the prince.[c]

Request of the guests

13 Turn, turn, O Shulammite,[d] that we may look upon thee.

Bride's reply

Why will ye look upon the Shulammite, as upon a martial dance?[e]

Praise of the bride by the attendant guests

7 1 How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince's daughter!
Thy rounded thighs are like jewels, the creation of a master hand.
2 Thy bosom is a round goblet, in which no mingled wine is wanting.
Thy body a heap of wheat fenced about with lilies.
3 Thy breasts are both like two fawns, the twins of a gazelle.
4 Thy neck is like a tower of ivory;[f] thy head like Carmel;[g]
Thine eyes as the pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim;
Thy nose is like the tower of Lebanon which looks toward Damascus.
5 Thy hair[h] is like purple; the king is held captive in its tresses.

Bridegroom's pleasure in her love

6 How fair and how pleasing art thou, O beloved, O delightful one![i]
7 This[j] thy stature is like a palm tree, and thy breasts like its clusters.
8 I said, I will climb up into the palm tree, I will take hold of its branches;
Let thy breasts be as clusters,[k] and the smell of thy breath like apples,
9 And thy mouth like the best wine, that glides over my lips and teeth.[l]

Bride's call to the bridegroom to depart with her to his home

10 I belong to my beloved, and his desire is toward me.
11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth,[m] let us lodge in the villages.

---

[b] 6[9] Supplying *of Jerusalem*, implied by the context and demanded by the metre.

[c] 6[12] This line is almost hopelessly corrupt. Many emendations have been suggested but none is convincing. The above reading is obtained simply by deleting the Heb. word commonly translated *my people*.

[d] 6[13] Heb. repeats *turn, turn*; but this is probably due to dittography, for it destroys the metre.

[e] 6[13] Heb., *as upon the dance of Mahanaim*. A slightly different punctuation of the Heb. gives the reading *two camps* or *camps*. The allusion is apparently to the military dances that might be seen at the warriors' camp.

[f] 7[4] Cf. 4[4] for the same figure. The last end of the line has apparently been lost, as the parallel passage in 4[4] indicates.

[g] 7[4] Completing this broken line by transferring [5a] which is inconsistent with its context. Heb. adds *upon thee*.

[h] 7[5] Lit., *hair of thy head*.

[i] 7[6] So Syr. Lit., *daughter of delights*. Through a slight error the Heb. reads *for delights*.

[j] 7[7] Possibly *this* is secondary.

[k] 7[8] Heb. adds *of the vine*; but this was probably appended by a scribe who lacked metrical sense.

[l] 7[9] This vs. is practically untranslatable as it stands. It has evidently suffered in transmission. The current translation, *that goeth down smoothly for my beloved, gliding through the lips of those that are asleep*, puts these words in the mouth of the bride; but the translation and interpretation are both doubtful. The first part is probably a scribal addition. A slight revision of the latter part gives the above reading, which is in harmony with the meaning and metre.

[m] 7[11] Heb. adds *the field*; but it is loosely connected with the context and probably a scribal expansion.

[12]Let us get up early to the vineyards, that we may see whether the vine hath
budded,
Whether its blossom is open, and the pomegranates are in flower;
There I will give to thee my love,[n] [13]while the mandrakes[o] give forth fragrance,
And at our doors are all kinds of good fruits, new and old,
Which I have laid up for thee, my beloved.
8 [1]O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother!
Should I find thee without, I would kiss thee, and none would despise me.
[2]I would lead thee into[p] my mother's house, and she would instruct me;
I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate.[q]

Farewell to her attendants

[4]I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
That ye stir not up nor awaken love until it please.

§ 33. **Arrival of the Bride and Bridegroom at Their Home,** Sg. of Sgs. 8^{5-14}

Question of the villagers

Sg. of Sgs. 8 [5]Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?[r]

Bride's address to her husband

Under the apple tree I awakened thee;
There thy mother was in travail with thee,
There was she in travail who bore thee.

Her marriage oath

[6]Place me as a seal upon thy heart,
Set me as a seal-ring[s] upon thine arm;
For love is as strong as death;
Jealousy is as irresistible as Sheol;
Its flames are flames of fire,
A very flame of Jehovah.[t]
[7]Many waters cannot extinguish love,
Neither can floods ever drown it.
If a man should give all his wealth for love,
He would be utterly despised.

---

[n] 7^{12} This half line is regarded as secondary by many, but it furnishes the natural complement to ^{10} which otherwise is isolated.

[o] 7^{13} Mandrakes appear to have been regarded by the ancients as the symbols of love.

[p] 8^2 Heb. adds *bring thee*. The absence of the connective indicates that it is a later insertion.

[q] 8^2 A scribe has added in the Heb., from 2^6, *let his hand be under my head, and his right hand embrace me*. His object was possibly to interpret the obscure vs. which precedes. The simple, natural interpretation is, on the whole, the most satisfactory.

§ 33 This song marks the consummation of the wedding ceremony: the conducting of the bride to the home of her future husband. The poet, with consummate dramatic art, has objectified and interpreted this concluding act by means of a dialogue between the bride and the bridegroom. As in 3^6 and 6^{10}, it is introduced by a question raised by the people. The powerful description of true marital love in $^{6, 7}$ was apparently the marriage oath uttered by the bride as she entered the home of her husband. In protesting that she possesses that purity which is essential to a faithful marriage, she quotes an earlier conversation between her brothers. In conclusion she declares that she is well content with humble life, though it is in striking contrast to the splendor of Solomon which had furnished the imagery for the marriage ceremonies.

[r] 8^5 These lines indicate the approach to the home of the bridegroom.

[s] 8^6 The original may have read *bracelet*. In the translation the implied verbal idea has been expressed.

[t] 8^6 *I. e.*, a divine, irresistible flame.

8 'We have a little sister, and she has no breasts;
What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she shall be spoken for?
9 If she prove to be a wall,
We will build upon her a turret of silver;
And if she prove to be a door,
We will enclose her with boards of cedar.'
10 I am a wall, and my breasts towers;
Now I am as one who has found peace.[u]

Assertion that she has proved to her family her chastity

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon;
He let out the vineyard to keepers,
Everyone for its fruit was to bring[v] silver;
12 But my vineyard, which is mine, is before me.
O Solomon, thou mayest have the thousand,
And those who keep its fruit two hundred!

Contentment with her humble lot

13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens,
The companions hearken for thy voice;
Cause me to hear it.

The bridegroom's request

14 Make haste, my beloved,
And be thou like a gazelle or a young hart,
Upon the mountains of spices.

The reminiscent refrain

---

[u] 8[10] So Gk.B. Heb., *in his eyes.*
[v] 8[11] Heb. adds *a thousand;* but this suggests the prosaic detail of a later scribe.

THE KINGLY AND MESSIANIC PSALMS

I. PETITIONS FOR THE KING'S WELFARE AND SUCCESS

Pss. 20, 21, 61, 72

II. THE DIVINE PROMISES TO DAVID AND TO HIS SUCCESSORS

Pss. $89^{17-21,\ 3,\ 4,\ 22-52}$, 2, 110, 132

III. A RULER'S OATH OF OFFICE

Ps. 101

IV. THE RULE OF JEHOVAH THE DIVINE KING

Pss. 24, 47, 93, 95, 96, 98, 97, 99, 22^{27-31}

THE KINGLY AND MESSIANIC PSALMS

I

PETITIONS FOR THE KING'S WELFARE AND SUCCESS

Pss. 20, 21, 61, 72

§ 34. A Prayer for Victory on the Eve of Battle, Ps. 20

May Jehovah help the king in battle and grant him success

Ps. 20 [1]May Jehovah answer thee in the day of stress,
May the name of the God of Jacob protect thee.
[2]May he send thee help from the sanctuary,
And from Zion may he sustain thee.
[3]May he remember all thy cereal-offerings,
And accept as perfect[a] thy burnt-offerings.[b]
[4]May he grant thee thy heart's desire,
May he bring to pass thine every plan.

Refrain by the chorus

[5]We will shout with joy over thy deliverance,
We will magnify[c] the name of our God.[d]

The Kingly Psalms of the Psalter.—The first group of kingly pss. consists of prayers or litanies apparently uttered when the king or ruler to which each refers was still living. They are without reasonable doubt the oldest group of pss. in the Psalter. Inasmuch as the king is the chief representative of the nation, the psalmists have incorporated in these pss. the noblest patriotic hopes of their age. In this group the national and material hopes which are frankly expressed, for example, in the early Balaam oracles, Nu. $23^{7-10, 18-24}$, $24^{3-9, 15-19}$, are combined with the nobler ethical ideals so clearly set forth by the great prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. Progress toward a more ethical and spiritual kingly ideal is clearly discernible when the pss. are arranged in their chronological order.

§ 34 The aspirations expressed in this ps. are closely related to those found in the Balaam oracles. It is full of youthful vigor and energy. It is apparently a litany, chanted by the priestly singers in the temple courts while an offering was being presented by the king. The one addressed in the opening stanza is the king, who was probably present, surrounded by his warriors. Three reasons are urged why Jehovah should give deliverance and victory: the first is his character and unique relation to the people in behalf of whose king the prayer is uttered; the second is the rich sacrifice, including both cereal and whole burnt offerings, which the king had probably caused to be presented to his divine Lord while this litany was being sung; the third is the vow of the priestly singers that if Jehovah will grant deliverance they will repay him with the gift of song and praise. It is the naïve, childish conception of Jehovah and of religion which here confronts us. The confident joyousness of the pre-exilic period is everywhere in evidence. The absence of the detailed references to persons, found, *e. g.*, in the song of Deborah and in David's lament over Saul and Jonathan, indicates that the litany was probably written to be used whenever the need for it arose. It may come from the days of Jehoshaphat or Amaziah or Uzziah or possibly Josiah. Its background is an hour of stress, when the self-sufficiency that characterized most of Judah's rulers was shaken; but its confident tone implies that it was written before the Assyrian and Babylonian armies had broken the strength of the Hebrews. In any case, it is one of the earliest pss. of the Psalter and is an excellent example of the pre-exilic royal hymn.

[a] 20[3] Lit., *accept as fat.*

[b] 20[3] So Syr., Targ., and certain Heb. MSS. The standard Heb. text has the singular.

[c] 20[5] So Gk., Lat., Syr., and revised Heb. texts. Certain Gk. texts read *rejoice in.*

[d] 20[5] In the Heb. a scribe has practically repeated [4a] at the end of [5], *May Jehovah bring to pass thine every request*, and inserted *Jehovah* in [6].

The assurance of Jehovah's answer

6 Now I know that he helpeth his anointed,
He answereth him from his sacred heavens
By his right hand's mighty deeds of deliverance.
7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
But we call upon[e] the name of[f] our God.
8 They it is who bow down and fall,
But we indeed arise and stand.

The refrain by the chorus

9 Jehovah hath delivered the king,
He answereth[g] us when we call upon him.[h]

§ 35. The God-Given Might of Israel's King, Ps. 21

Thanks to Jehovah for the blessings conferred upon the king

Ps. 21 1 In thy strength, O Jehovah, the king rejoiceth,
And in thy help[i] he greatly exulteth.[j]
2 Thou hast granted him his heart's desire,
And the request of his lips thou hast not denied;
3 For thou meetest him with the blessings of prosperity,
Thou settest on his head a golden crown.
4 Life he asked of thee, thou gavest it to him,
Length of days forever and ever.[k]
5 Great is his glory through thy help,
Honor and majesty thou bestowest upon him,
6 For thou givest him everlasting blessings,
Thou dost delight him with joy in thy presence.

Refrain by the chorus

7 For the king ever trusteth in the Lord,
Through the kindness of the Most High he cannot be moved.

His power is invincible because Jehovah helps him

8 Thine hand will find all thy foes,
Thy right hand will find[l] those who hate thee.
9 Thou wilt make them as a furnace of fire[m]
At the time of thine appearing.

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[e] 20:7 Gk. and Syr., *we are great*, but the current Heb. reading, lit., *make mention, remember*, is more in harmony with the rest of the sentence.

[f] 20:7 So Gk. Heb. adds *Jehovah*.

[g] 20:9 Gk. and Lat., *answer us*.

[h] 20:9 Lit., *on the day of our calling*.

§ 35 In structure and thought this ps. is closely related to 20. Its second vs. is an echo of 20:4. The same king evidently originally figured in both. The one ps. is perhaps a litany to be sung before battle and the other a Te Deum to be sung after the victory had been won. The allusions, however, in 21 are not to a definite event but are general. Not merely victory in war but the conferring of the blessings which every Heb. king desired are described in the opening stanza. The warlike note is much stronger in the second main stanza where the king is directly addressed, even as in the first stanza of 20. The ps. presents a noble though warlike kingly ideal. It is the portrait not of a tyrant but of a king who, true to the Hebrew ideal, ruled as the viceroy of Jehovah and the servant of the people. The ps. consists of two stanzas of twelve lines each followed by a refrain of two lines which was probably sung by the people in unison.

[i] 21:1 Possibly this should (with Briggs, *Pss.*, I, 183), here and throughout the ps., be translated *victory*.

[j] 21:1 So Gk., Syr., and Lat.

[k] 21:4 Cf., for a similar request, I Sam. 10:24, II Sam. 16:16, I Kgs. 1:25.

[l] 21:8 Or, revising the text to avoid the repetition of the same verb, *pierce through*, or, *shatter*.

[m] 21:9 Or, revising the Heb. to bring it into closer harmony with the context, *Thou wilt put them in a furnace of fire* (so Briggs, *Pss.*, I, 183).

The Lord, in his anger, will swallow them,
And the fire of his wrath will devour them.
[10]Their offspring thou wilt destroy from the earth,
And their descendants from among the sons of men.
[11]Though they plan evil against thee,
Conceive a plot, they shall not prevail,
[12]For thou wilt put them to flight,[n]
And aim at their faces with thy bowstring.

[13]Arise, O Jehovah, in thy strength,
We will sing and praise thy might.[o]

Refrain by the chorus

§ 36. Confidence in God's Protection of His People and King, Ps. 61

Ps. 61 [1]Attend to my cry, O Jehovah, give heed to my prayer.
[2]From the end of the earth I will call to thee, when my heart fainteth.
Lead thou me to the rock that is higher than I,[p]
[3]For thou art a refuge for me, a strong tower from the presence of the enemy.

Petition for protection

[4]I will be a guest in thy tent forever; I will take refuge under the cover of thy wings.
[5]For thou, O Jehovah, hast heard my vows;
Thou hast granted the request[q] of those who fear thy name.

Assurance of that protection

[6]Days to the king's days wilt thou add,
His years shall be for[r] generation to generation.
[7]He shall abide before Jehovah forever,
Kindness and faithfulness will preserve him,[s]
[8]So will I sing praise to thy name forever,
While I daily perform my vows.

And of a long rule for the king

---

[n] 21[12] Lit., *Thou will put them the shoulder*.

[o] 21[13] Gk. and Lat., *mighty deeds*.

§ 36 Vs. [2] of this ps. suggests that the author was an exile; but the declaration that he will call upon Jehovah even from the ends of the earth may be but a superlative expression of his confidence that Jehovah is able to help him wherever he is. The figures of the rock, of the strong tower, and of being Jehovah's guest in his tent point to the earlier and simpler days rather than to the later. In Ps. 23 the psalmist looks forward to dwelling in Jehovah's temple rather than in his tent, as here. The vow was also a prominent pre-exilic institution. The reference to the king in [6-8] is alone satisfied by a pre-exilic setting, for he is a Hebrew ruler. Vs. [5] implies that it was a collective ps. It was a prayer equally fitting for the individual or the community, although the reference to the king emphasized its public character. In the light of all the facts, it may, with 20 and 21, be assigned to a pre-exilic date. The days of Jeremiah and Josiah furnish a fitting background. The original reading, *Jehovah*, which was changed by a later editor to *God*, has been restored.

[p] 61[2] Gk., Lat., and Syr., *On the rock mayest thou lift me up*. But Heb., Syr., Old Lat., and Targ. read as above.

[q] 61[5] Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads, *heritage*.

[r] 61[6] Again revising the obscure Heb.

[s] 61[7] So Syr., Lat., two Heb. MSS., and the demands of the context.

§ 37. Prayer That the King's Rule May Be Just, Beneficent, and Enduring, Ps. 72

The reign of justice and peace

Ps. 72 1 Grant the king thy justice,[t] O Jehovah,
And thy righteousness to the king's son.
2 May he judge thy people in righteousness,
And thine afflicted ones with justice.
3 May the mountains bear peace to the people,
And the hills bring forth righteousness.[u]
4 May he vindicate the afflicted among the people,
May he help the sons of the needy.[v]
5 May he fear thee[w] while the sun endureth,
As long as the moon shineth, even forever.
6 May he descend like rain upon the mown grass,
Like rain-drops that water the earth.
7 May righteousness[x] flourish in his days,
And abundant peace until the moon be no more.

World-wide rule

8 May he rule from sea to sea,
And from the river unto the ends of the earth.
9 May adversaries[y] bow before him,
And his enemies lick the dust.
10 May the kings of Tarshish and the coast-lands bring a gift,
The kings of Sheba and Seba pay tribute.
11 May all kings pay him homage,
May all the nations serve him.

The deliverance of the needy and afflicted

12 For he delivereth the needy who cry,
And the afflicted who have no helper.

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§ 37 At least a century of remarkable moral and religious development apparently lies between this ps. and 20 and 21. Here the ideals of Am., Hos., and Is. are woven into a majestic royal ode. Like the laws in Dt. 17[14-20], which define the duties of a Heb. ruler to his subjects, this ps. was evidently written in order to place before the king worthy ideals to guide him in his rule. It recalls the poem of the Egyptian prophet Ipuwer, who lived not long after 2000 B.C. After describing the overthrow of existing political and social evils, this Egyptian forerunner of the Heb. prophets declared that a just king would arise who *would smite evil when he raises his arm against it*. Josiah was the only king in Judah's later history who, even in part, realised the social ideals set forth in this wonderful ps. Of him Jeremiah declared, *He executed law and justice; he judged the cause of the poor and needy* (Jer. 22[15, 16]). Evidently Josiah's benign policy was in the mind of the psalmist. The description in [12-14] fits no other Heb. ruler so well—not even David. Ps. 72 is the poetic counterpart of the book of Dt., which comes from the same period. The poetry in [8-11] is the antithesis of that of the Prince of Peace pictured in the remainder of the ps. It voices Israel's narrow national prejudices and selfish ambitions. The immediate sequel of [1-7] is [12-15]. In the light of these facts it is possible that [8-11] came from the hands of a later editor who missed the promise of world-wide dominion which is found in the primitive Balaam oracle and which seemed to him more important than the visions of justice and mercy that were to mark the rule of Jehovah's king.

Little wonder that the Christian world has long regarded this ps. as messianic. It so far transcends anything realised by even the best of Israel's rulers that it points unmistakably to the future. It is a marvellous foreshadowing of the divine purpose to be realised in human society. It is by no means an exact portrait of Jesus, the Prince of Peace; but it nobly formulates certain of the social ideals which he strove to implant in the minds of his followers.

[t] 72[1] So Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., *judgments*.

[u] 72[3] Slightly correcting the Heb. and adding the verb implied by the context.

[v] 72[4] The Heb. adds *and may he crush the oppressor*. This is a later insertion, for it is not grammatically or logically connected with the context and is not metrically complete.

[w] 72[5] Following the Gk. Heb., *may they fear thee*.

[x] 72[7] So certain MSS., Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., *a righteous man*.

[y] 72[9] Slightly correcting the corrupt Heb.

[13]He hath pity on the poor and needy,
And saveth the life of the poor.
[14]He saveth them[a] from extortion and violence,
And their life blood is precious in his sight;
[15]So may they live and give him of Sheba's gold,[a]
And pray for him continually,
And bless him all the day long.

The king's prosperity and enduring rule

[16]May there be abundance of grain in the land,
On the hill top may his fruit rustle[b] like Lebanon;
And may they blossom forth[c] from the city like the wild herbs.
[17]May his name endure forever,
May his name be established as long as the sun shineth,[d]
May all nations[e] ask a blessing like his and call him happy.

Concluding doxology

[18]Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
He who alone doeth wondrous things,
Praised be his glorious name forever,
[19]Let the whole earth be filled with his glory,
Amen and amen.[f]

II

THE DIVINE PROMISES TO DAVID AND HIS SUCCESSORS

Pss. $89^{17-21, 3, 4, 22-52}$, 2, 110, 132

§ 38. The Sad Contrast between Jehovah's Promise to David and the Fate of His House, Ps. $89^{17-21, 3, 4, 22-52}$

Jehovah's original choice and covenant with David

Ps. 89 [17]Thou[a] art the glory of our strength,
And by thy favor thou hast exalted our horn.
[18]For our shield belongeth to Jehovah,
And our king to the Holy One of Israel.

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[a] 72^{14} Possibly this word is secondary.
[a] 72^{15} This line may be secondary. The verbs in the Heb. are singular.
[b] 72^{16} The exact meaning of this word is not certain.
[c] 72^{16} Possibly the text is here corrupt.
[d] 72^{17} The Heb. is untranslatable. The above rendering is based on a plausible reconstruction of the text.
[e] 72^{17} The Gk. adds *all the families of the earth*.
[f] 72^{19} Vss. [18, 19] are the doxology with which this section of the Psalter closes. The Heb. adds *the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended*.

§ 38 As Briggs has shown (*Pss.*, II, 250–254), Ps. 89 consists of two and possibly three originally independent poems. This is evinced by the different metre employed and by the dissimilar themes treated in different parts of the ps. The older ps., written in the three-beat measure, based on the traditional covenant with David recorded in II Sam. 7^{8-16}, and emphasising the contrast between the promise and the fate of the reigning house of Judah, is clearly the older literary unit. In theme and style it is closely parallel to the older poems in the book of Lam. The description in [38-45] implies that the psalmist was personally acquainted with the king whose fate he bewailed. It describes well either Jehoiachin or Zedekiah. Vs. [45] perhaps fits best the ill-fated

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[a] 89^{17} The editor who combined the two pss. in 89 has added *for* at the beginning of this line and transformed the original *our* required by the parallelism into *his*.

19 Once[b] thou didst speak in a vision
To thy holy one,[c] and didst say:
I have placed a crown[d] upon a hero,[e]
I have exalted one chosen from the people;
20 I found David my servant,
With my holy oil I anointed him;
21 With whom my hand is established,
Mine arm also doth strengthen him.
3 I made a covenant with my chosen one;[f]
I swore to David my servant:
4 'I will establish thy seed forever,
And build thy throne for all generations.'

The divine promise to protect him, to extend his rule, and to make it eternal

22 The enemy shall not exact[g] from him,
The wrong-doers[h] shall not afflict him.
23 And I will crush his adversaries before him,
And I will smite down those who hate him.
24 But my faithfulness and lovingkindness shall be with him,
And through my name shall his horn be exalted.
25 I will set his hand also on the sea,
And his right hand on the rivers.[i]
26 He shall cry to me, 'Thou art my father,
My God, and the rock of my salvation.'
27 I will also make him my first-born,
Most high above the kings of earth.
28 My lovingkindness will I keep for him forevermore,
And my covenant shall stand fast for him.
29 His seed will I preserve forever,
And his throne as the days of heaven.

Conditions upon which the divine promises were based

30 If his sons forsake my law,
And walk not in my judgments,
31 If they profane my statutes,
And keep not my commands;
32 Then will I visit their transgressions with a rod,
And their iniquity with stripes.

Zedekiah. The later editor, in the process of reconstruction, evidently transferred [3, 4] from their original position after [21] and injected them into the midst of a later poem written in the four-beat measure describing Jehovah's might and goodness. This wonderfully symmetrical and powerful song of adoration is found in [1, 2, 5-18]. Cf. § 94. To the royal hymn which comes from the earlier part of the Babylonian exile, the final editor of the ps., who probably lived in the Gk. period not long before the beginning of the Maccabean struggle, has appended a four-beat poem, in [46-51], bewailing the fate that had overtaken Jehovah's people, and especially the faithful in the Jewish community.

[b] 89[19] Lit., *then*, *i. e.*, referring to the promises to David recorded in II Sam 7[8-16].

[c] 89[19] So certain Heb. MSS. Heb., *holy ones*. The reference is clearly to Nathan. Cf. II Sam. 7[4].

[d] 89[19] Correcting the Heb. which reads, probably through a scribal error, *help*.

[e] 89[19] *I. e.*, David, the mighty warrior.

[f] 89[3] Cf. the natural antecedent in [19].

[g] 89[22] So Gk. and a possible translation of the Heb. Syr. and Lat., *come treacherously upon*.

[h] 89[22] Lit., *son of wrong*. The Heb. phrase clearly has a collective meaning.

[i] 89[25] If the plural is retained it refers to the Tigris as well as the Euphrates, and probably includes the connecting canals.

33 But my lovingkindness will I not remove[j] from thee,
I will not belie[k] my faithfulness.
34 I will not profane my covenant,
Nor alter that which hath issued from my lips.
35 Once have I sworn by my holiness,
Verily, I will not lie unto David.
36 His seed shall endure forever,
And his throne as the sun before me,
37 As the moon shall it be established forever,
Even as long as[l] the sky is firm.

The present fate of the Davidic house

38 But thou hast cast off and rejected,
Thou hast been exceedingly wroth with thine anointed.
39 Thou hast spurned the covenant of thy servant,
Thou hast profaned his crown to the ground.
40 Thou hast broken down his fences,
Thou hast made his fortresses a ruin.
41 All the passersby rob him,
He hath become an object of reproach to his neighbors.
42 Thou hast exalted the right hand of his adversaries,
Thou hast made all his enemies rejoice.
43 Yea, thou hast turned back[m] his sword,
And thou hast not made him stand in battle.
44 Thou hast made his lustre to cease,[n]
And flung down his throne to the ground.
45 Thou hast shortened the days of his youth,
Yea, thou hast covered him with shame.

When will Jehovah redeem his promises and deliver his people

46 How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou hide thyself?
Shall thy wrath forever burn like fire?
47 Remember, O Lord,[o] the duration of life;[p]
For what vanity hast thou created all the sons of men!
48 What man is there who shall live and not see death,
Who can deliver his life from the power of Sheol?
49 O Lord, where are thy former acts of kindness,
Which thou didst swear to David in thy faithfulness?
50 Remember, O Lord, the reproach of thy servants,
My bearing in my bosom all the sins[q] of the peoples,
51 With which thine enemies reproach thee, O Jehovah,
With which they reproach the footsteps of thine anointed.[r]

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j 89:33 So certain Heb. MSS., Lat., and Syr. supported by the parallel in II Sam. 7:15.
k 89:33 So Briggs felicitously renders the Heb. verb.
l 89:37 Slightly revising the corrupt and unintelligible Heb.
m 89:43 So a revised Heb. text. Or, *edge*.
n 89:44 Or, revising to bring this line into close parallelism with the next, *his scepter from his hand*, or, with Briggs, *Thou hast taken away the scepter of majesty*.
o 89:47 Correcting an obvious scribal error.
p 89:47 Lit., *what duration*, *i. e.*, of man's life.
q 89:50 Correcting the Heb. by the aid of Aquila and Lat.
r 89:51 This ps. concludes with the doxology that closes the third division of the Psalter, *Bless Jehovah forever. Amen and amen.*

§ 39. Jehovah's Care for His King, Ps. 2

Conspiracy of the nations against Jehovah's Messiah

Ps. 2 1 Why do the heathen throng together,[s]
And the peoples devise vain plans?
2 The kings of the earth take their stand,
And the princes consult together,[t]
Against Jehovah and his anointed [saying],
3 'Let us tear apart their bonds,
Let us cast from us their cords.'

Jehovah's contempt for the conspirators

4 One throned in heaven laugheth,
At them the Lord mocketh;
5 Then he saith to them in his wrath,
In his burning anger affrighting them:
6 'It is I who have set[u] my king
On Zion, my sacred mountain.'

His promise of dominion to his anointed king

7 Let me declare Jehovah's decree!
He hath said to me: 'Thou art my son,[v]
This day have I begotten thee;
8 I will give[w] the heathen as thy heritage,
And the ends of the earth for thy possession,

---

§ 39 This ps., like 1, has no superscription. It was clearly given its present position as an introduction to the collection of Davidic pss. which follows in 3–41. Its basis is the covenant and promise made to David according to II Sam. 7^{11-16}. In ^{7} the psalmist puts in the mouth of the king the promise of II Sam. 7^{14a}, *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son*. The poet assumes as his historical background the period after David had established his dynasty at Jerusalem and had subjugated the surrounding nations. It is apparently in David's mouth, as the representative of Israel's reigning house, that the poet puts the words in $^{7-9}$, which embody his messianic hopes. These contemplate the world-wide rule of the messianic king. The great kingdoms of Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia, and the repeated rebellions of the subject peoples, are evidently before the psalmist's mind. To him the splendors and glory, which the Chronicler projected back into the days of David and Solomon, lie in the future. Not the sword but Jehovah's might is to bring about this consummation.

The ps. apparently reflects the broadened vision that came with the experiences of the exile; but it is difficult to date it with assurance. Except for the presence of several Aram. words, the language is free from indications of late influence. Israel's outlook is hopeful. On the distant horizon are great national rebellions. The opening days of the reign of Darius, when every messenger brought reports of a new rebellion and when, as we learn from the sermons of Haggai and Zechariah, cf. Hag. 2^{20-23}, Zech. 2, the Jews hoped that a Davidic king would speedily arise in their midst and set up a world-wide kingdom, furnish the most satisfactory setting. This is also in harmony with its position at the head of the earliest Davidic collection of pss. Cf. Introd., p. 45.

The ps. is remarkably symmetrical and falls into four stanzas of approximately seven lines each. The strophic parallelism is most marked: the first and fourth are synonymous and stand in the antithetic relation to the second and third, which are synonymous.

The hopes of the ps. never found their complete realization in Israel's history; but the absolute trust in Jehovah and in the ultimate victory of the right that pervades it lifts it above all local conditions and gives it a universal significance which finds its true realization in the kingdom of God established by Jesus.

[s] 2^{1} The usual conjectural rendering of this rare verb, *rage*, is not supported by the present context or the obvious meaning of the noun derived from the same root in 55^{14} and 64^{2}, where the parallelism requires *throng* or *conspiracy*. Cf. Dan. $6^{6, 11}$, *assemble together*.

[t] 2^{2} Some commentators would revise the text to read, *contrive plots*, on the strength of the parallelism, but the accepted reading expresses hostile action.

[u] 2^{6} The Gk. reads, *I was set by him*.

[v] 2^{7} Possibly the first two lines should be emended to read, *I have said, Thou art my son*. Cf. the gospel use of this passage in Mk. 1^{11}, 9^{2-8}, also Rom. 1^{4}, Acts 13^{33}. This vs. contains an echo of the old Semitic formula of adoption. Cf. Code of Hammurabi, § 170.

[w] 2^{8} The Heb. adds *ask of me;* but this introduces two extra beats into the line and interrupts the thought. It seems to be a later toning down of the strong messianic promise.

9With an iron rod shalt thou break them in pieces,[x]
Like a potter's vessel dash them to fragments.'

Warning to the conspirators

10Therefore, act wisely, O kings,
Be advised, ye rulers[y] of earth!
11Serve Jehovah with fear,
And rejoice in him with trembling.[z]
12Worship sincerely,[a] lest he be angry
Lest ye perish from the right[b] way,
For his anger is quickly kindled.
Happy are all seeking refuge in him![c]

§ 40. Jehovah's Promises to the Ruler of His People, Ps. 110

Assurances of divine support

Ps. 110 1Jehovah's oracle to my lord:
'Sit thou at my right hand,[d]
Until I make thine enemies a stool for thy feet.'
2Jehovah will extend the rod of thy strength;
From Zion rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
3The people will volunteer[e] in the day of thy battle array;[f]
From the womb of the morning thou shalt have the dew of thy youth.[g]

Commission as high priest and general

4Jehovah hath sworn and will not regret it,
Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek;[h]
5The Lord is at thy right hand;
He doth smite in the day of his wrath.
6He judgeth, he filleth the valleys[i] with the nations.
He doth smite the chiefs[j] over the wide earth.

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[x] 2[9] Or, *rule as shepherd;* but the parallelism favors the above reading.

[y] 2[10] Lit., *judges*, but the term is evidently used as in Judges for *rulers*.

[z] 2[11] Or, revising the text, *submit yourselves to him*. The Gk. retains the *in him* required by the metre.

[a] 2[12] So Sym. and Old Lat. The rendering, *kiss the son*, makes no sense and arose through the influence of the Aramaic. The Heb. means, lit., *kiss purely*, as in Job 31[27]. Cf. also I Kgs. 19[18] and Hos. 13[2], the reference is to adoration and worship. A plausible emendation reads, *kiss him, i. e.*, worship him.

[b] 2[12] So Gk. The Heb. omits *right* but the metre requires it.

[c] 2[12] This line is possibly a later liturgical addition, since it has no real connection with the rest of the ps., and especially the preceding lines, which refer not to the afflicted who need a refuge but to the rulers of the earth.

§ 40 This vigorous, stately, highly poetic ps. breathes the warlike spirit of the Maccabean era. Evidently the tide of battle has turned in favor of the Jews, and they are already rejoicing in the attainment of political independence. Although brief, it is full of allusions to Israel's earlier hopes and conditions. The figure in [4] is based on the late Jewish tradition in Gen. 14. According to I Mac. 14[41], Simon and his descendants were assured the high-priesthood forever. Like the ancient priest-king of Gen. 14, he combined both civil and religious authority. The initial letters of [1b, 2, 3,] and [4] spell the name Simon, the last of the sons of Mattathias, whose achievements and reign, as suggested in this ps., correspond closely to the detailed record of I Mac. There is little doubt, therefore, that this is a Maccabean ps. It may be dated with assurance in the year 141 B.C., when Simon was proclaimed *high priest, general, and governor of the Jews and the priests, and protector of all.* I Mac. 14[47].

[d] 110[1] Dividing the vs. as the metre and parallelism demand.

[e] 110[3] *I. e.*, come forward and join the ranks readily when the army is mustered.

[f] 110[3] So Lat. and Aquila. The Heb. adds *in holy array;* but this destroys the metre and is clearly a later gloss.

[g] 110[3] *I. e.*, the fresh, vigorous warriors who, like sparkling dewdrops upon the vegetation, gleam in the morning light.

[h] 110[4] *Melchizedek* may be a later addition. At any rate the reference is to the late Jewish story in Gen. 14[18-21].

[i] 110[6] So Aquila, Sym., and Jerome.

[j] 110[6] So Gk. Heb., *chief*, or *head*.

[7]An inheritance by the way he maketh it:
Therefore he lifteth up his head.[k]

§ 41. Jehovah's Promises to David and to Zion, Ps. 132

David's vow

Ps. 132 [1]Jehovah, remember for David all his affliction;[l]
[2]How he swore to Jehovah and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:
[3]'I will not enter into the tent of my house, nor go up into my bed;[m]
[4]I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eye-lids;[n]
[5]Until I find a place for Jehovah, a habitation[o] for the Mighty One of Jacob.'

The transfer of the ark to Jerusalem

[6]Lo, we heard of it in Ephrathah;[p] we found it in the field of Jearim.
[7]Let us come to his abode; let us worship at his footstool.[q]
[8]Arise, O Jehovah, to thy resting place;[r] with the ark of thy strength.
[9]Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and thy pious ones rejoice.[s]

Jehovah's covenant with David

[10]For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thine anointed.[t]
[11]Jehovah swore unto David in truth, he will not depart from it:
'Of the fruit of thy body will I set one for thee upon thy throne.
[12]If thy children but keep my covenant and my testimony, which I teach them,
Their children also shall be forever, they shall sit upon thy throne.'

Jehovah's choice and provisions for Jerusalem

[13]For Jehovah hath chosen Zion, he desired it for his habitation;
[14][Saying]: 'This is my resting place forever; here will I dwell, for I desire it.
[15]I will bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread;
[16]And her priests will I clothe with salvation, and her pious ones will shout for joy.

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[k] 110[7] An exceedingly difficult vs. Heb. reads, *He drinks of the brook on the way; therefore he lifts up his head.* The above translation follows a reconstruction suggested by Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 379).

§ 41 Like Ps. 89, this ps. is based on the covenant with David recorded in II Sam. 7[11-16]. The psalmist is, however, familiar with the writings of the Chronicler, II Chr. 6[40-42], and with a late Jewish tradition regarding the removal of the ark to Jerusalem in the days of David. He also uses the terms and is imbued with the ideas of the late priestly school. Cf. [9, 12]. The *pious ones* mentioned in [9, 16] are probably the Hasideans who rallied about Judas Maccabeus. The literary style of the ps. is awkward and repetitious and lacks the vigor of the earlier periods. It probably comes from the Maccabean period and voices the hope that Jehovah will redeem his promises to Jerusalem and the house of David through the achievements of the Hasmonean rulers. *The lamp for Jehovah's anointed* (David), [17], was probably Simon, who revived the traditions and glories of the Davidic dynasty. It is significant that in the closing stanza the psalmist puts the chief emphasis on the restoration of Jerusalem.

[l] 132[1] The reference is probably to the misfortunes attendant upon David's first attempt to remove the ark to Jerusalem. Cf. II Sam. 6[1-11].

[m] 132[3] No such oath is recorded elsewhere in the O.T. It is either an inference from the historical situation or an element taken from later Jewish tradition.

[n] 132[4] Cf. for the same idiom, Pr. 6[4].

[o] 132[5] The Heb. plural probably emphasises the size and dignity of the dwelling place in which Jehovah's ark was to abide.

[p] 132[6] Ephrathah, in Ruth 4[11] and Mic. 5[2], is the designation of the region about Bethlehem. From this context it appears that it included the region southwest of Jerusalem in which Kirjath-Jearim, where the ark has been left, according to I Sam. 7[1], was situated.

[q] 132[7] The historical narrative is here condensed. This vs. describes the resolve of the people.

[r] 132[8] An echo of the ancient song that, according to Nu. 10[35], was sung in the wilderness whenever the people took up the ark and began the march. It is probably quoted from II Chr. 6[41].

[s] 132[9] So II Chr. 6[41] and repeated in [16].

[t] 132[10] Possibly this vs. is simply an addition from II Chr. 6[42].

[17]There will I make the horn of David bud;[u] I have arranged a lamp[v] for
mine anointed.
[18]His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon him his crown will bloom.'

III

THE IDEALS OF AN UPRIGHT RULER

Ps. 101

§ 42. A Maccabean Ruler's Oath of Office, Ps. 101

The principles which shall guide him

Ps. 101 [1]Of mercy and justice will I sing to thee, O Jehovah.[a]
[2]I will behave myself wisely[b] and blamelessly. O when wilt thou come to
me?
I will walk in uprightness of mind in the midst of my house.[c]
[3]I will set[d] before mine eyes nothing that is base,[e]
I hate an act of apostasy;[f] it shall not cleave to me.
[4]A perverse purpose[g] I will banish from me; I will know no evil.

His attitude toward right and wrong doers

[5]Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him will I cut off;
Whoever has a high look and a proud heart, him will I not tolerate.
[6]Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with
me;

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[u] 132[17] This figure is derived from Ezek. 29[21].

[v] 132[17] Cf. I Kgs. 15[4], where Rehoboam is described as *the lamp* of David.

§ 42 This ps. is an important historical document. In I Mac. 14[14] it is recorded of Simon, the Maccabean ruler, that

> *He strengthened all the distressed of his people,*
> *He was full of zeal for the law,*
> *And every lawless and wicked person he banished.*

There is every reason to believe that this ps. voices the ideals of Simon, who out of gratitude was made by his Jewish subjects their governor, military commander, and high priest. Of all the Maccabean rulers he was the most famous *for the justice and faith which he showed to his nation, and because he sought by all means to exalt his people . . . so that the heathen were taken away from their country, as well as those who were in the city of David* (I Mac. 14[35, 36]). It expresses well the spirit that actuated the early Maccabean rulers. The reference in [3] to, lit., *the work of them that turn aside* is clearly an allusion to the apostate Jews whose leanings toward Hellenism had precipitated the Maccabean struggle. The reference in the second line of [5] is probably to the Sadducean nobles with which the Maccabeans as yet had made no alliances. The ps. gives an exceedingly vivid picture not only of the noble motives which actuated Simon but also of the difficult conditions with which he had to deal. Its five-beat metre emphasizes the deep feeling which inspired him.

[a] 101[1] The Heb. adds, echoing the main verb, *I would sing praises;* but this destroys the metre and is apparently the work of a later scribe. Duhm and other commentators would reconstruct the original verb so as to read, *I will keep mercy and justice.* While this reconstruction is possibly original, it is only a conjecture.

[b] 101[2] Lit., *in the way of uprightness.* Cf. [6], *in an upright way.*

[c] 101[2] Certain scholars would reconstruct the Heb. so that this vs. would read, *I will give heed to the way of the upright when he comes before me.* While it is probable that the latter part of this line is corrupt, this reconstruction is not in harmony with its context. The first stanza of the ps. deals with the ruler's personal motives and actions. It is not until the second stanza that he describes his treatment of the wicked and the upright.

[d] 101[3] This verb and those throughout the ps. may be translated in the present, describing habitual action, but interpreted in the future tense they bring out more clearly the idea of the vow which underlies the ps. It corresponds in many ways to our modern oath of office.

[e] 101[3] Lit., *thing of belial.*

[f] 101[3] Or, *the work of those who turn aside.*

[g] 101[4] Lit., *a perverse mind.* Either a reference to the current tendency toward Hellenism or to falsehood in general.

He who walks in an upright manner, that one shall serve me.
7He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He who speaks falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes.
8Zealously[h] will I destroy all the wicked of the land,
That I may cut off from the city of Jehovah all wicked doers.

IV

THE RULE OF JEHOVAH THE DIVINE KING

Ps. 24, 47, 93, 95, 96, 98, 97, 99, 22[27-31]

§ 43. The Homage Due Jehovah the Universal King, Ps. 24

Priests: Jehovah's universal rule

Ps. 24 1The earth is Jehovah's and all that it contains,
The world and those who dwell therein;
2For[a] he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.[b]

Question of people

3Who may ascend the hill of Jehovah?
Who may stand in His holy place?

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[h] 101[8] Lit., *to mornings*. The Heb. idiom, *to rise early in the morning*, was equivalent to our Eng. verb, *to be zealous*. The present idiom expresses the idea of being constantly zealous.

The Rule of Jehovah the Divine King.—A phase of the messianic hope very different from that expressed in the preceding sections is developed in the present group of pss. The Davidic king has disappeared completely from the psalmist's vision and instead Jehovah is the divine King, who rules supreme not only over little Israel but over all nations and the universe. These pss. represent in many ways the noblest and most spiritual expression of Israel's messianic hope. In the light of the prophetic writings, it is possible to trace the gradual unfolding of this belief. Like the Davidic national hopes, its genesis may be traced back to the days of the united Heb. kingdom. The example of one king ruling over all the tribes of Israel and their conquered neighbors suggested the analogy of one divine King ruling supreme over Jew and Gentile alike. The prophet Amos was the first to express the definite conviction that Jehovah directed the fortunes of Israel's heathen neighbors as well as those of his chosen people. Acquaintance with the Assyr., Baby., and Persian empires, each ruled by one absolute monarch whose authority extended almost to the bounds of the known world, tended powerfully to broaden Israel's conception of the extent of Jehovah's rule. The exile also brought them into touch with many foreign peoples and developed within the hearts of certain enlightened Jews the desire to share with other peoples the worship of the one God who had specially revealed himself to the Jewish people.

Zechariah, whose date, early in the Persian period, can be absolutely fixed, is the first prophet to express definitely this missionary hope: *In those days ten men out of all the languages of the nations shall take hold of the skirt of him who is a Jew, saying: 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'* In Is. 56[7] the noble hope is also expressed that Jehovah's house shall *be called the house of prayer for all people*. The unknown prophet of Zech. 14[9], who wrote during the latter part of the Gk. period or during the Maccabean age, also clearly declared, *Jehovah shall be king all over the earth*.

In these pss., which describe Jehovah's kingly rule, the liturgical element is prominent. The authors of most of them were well acquainted with the later O.T. writings: Ezek., II Is., Gen., Job, and many of the earlier pss. The influence of II Isaiah is especially strong. These pss. represent the high-water mark of Israel's messianic hopes. Their ideals are broader, less national, and more universal than those found elsewhere in the Psalter. They probably reflect the larger outlook of the Jews of the dispersion, and may well have been written to be sung by the pilgrims as they came streaming from the distant lands of the exiles to pay homage to the divine King at the great annual feast in the days following the restoration of the Judean community as a result of Nehemiah's work. They formulate that exalted belief in the rule or kingdom of God which was given the central place in the teachings of Jesus. Spiritualized, ethicized, individualized, and yet universalized by him, this conception of Jehovah's rule became the corner-stone of Christianity.

§ 43 Many interpreters find in this ps. two or three distinct units. Vss. [1, 2] describe Jehovah's universal rule; vss. [3-6] those eligible to worship in Jehovah's temple; vss. [7-10] the entrance of

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[a] 24[2] The *for* is lacking in the Gk., Sym., and Theod., and may be a later addition.
[b] 24[2] *I. e.*, the great waters, which, according the primitive Semitic belief, encircled the earth.

4 He that hath clean hands and a pure heart,
Who hath not sworn falsely.[c]
5 He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,
And vindication[d] from the God of his salvation.
6 This is the generation of them that seek him,[e]
That seek the face of Jacob's God.[f]

Qualifications of his worshippers

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
And lift yourselves up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of Glory will come in.

People: advent of Jehovah

8 Who is this King of Glory?
Jehovah, strong and mighty,
Jehovah mighty in battle.

Priests: his character

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
And lift yourselves up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of Glory will come in.

People: open to him

10 Who is this King of Glory?
Jehovah, the God of hosts,
He is the King of Glory.

Priests: his might

Jehovah into his temple. There is unquestionably a certain literary unity in the ps., whether it be original or the work of the editor, for throughout Jehovah is the object of homage, and the theme is the going up of the people to the temple to worship. The date of the concluding section, $^{7-10}$, is the crux of the whole question. Its background is evidently an important event in the history of the temple. Three such events have been advocated by different interpreters: (1) the dedication of Solomon's temple; (2) the rededication of the second temple in 516; and (3) the reconsecration of the temple in 165 B.C. The martial note favors either the earliest or the latest date, but the position of the ps. in the Psalter does not favor the Maccabean period although it does not entirely preclude it. The reference to the everlasting doors, lit., *doors of eternity*, is inconsistent with the original dedication of the temple, if the allusion is to the gates of the temple itself. That the author or at least the editor of the ps. in its present form had in mind the temple gates is clearly shown by the first part of the ps., *e. g.*, ^{3}. Furthermore, there is no suggestion in the ps. that the author had in mind the gates of Jerusalem. The peculiar phrase, *King of Glory*, recalls the similar titles which the Baby. kings employed in their public decrees and historical inscriptions. Jehovah's entrance into his temple implies that, according to the belief of his worshippers, he had for a time abandoned it. From Ezek. and elsewhere in the contemporary literature we learn that this was precisely what was popularly believed by the Jews during the period of the Baby. exile. Ezekiel taught that Jehovah had temporarily taken up his abode on a distant mountain in the north. The problem that disturbed the temple builders to whom Zechariah spoke was whether or not Jehovah would be satisfied with the temple and its service, polluted as they had been by the presence of the heathen. Cf. Zech. 3^{1-4}. The second half of this ps., therefore, is peculiarly appropriate in connection with the rededication of the second temple. It implies that the people marched in solemn procession to the temple very much as they did at the dedication of the walls a few years later. Cf. Neh. 12^{31-40}. Equally appropriate is the opening stanza of Ps. 24, which describes the universality of Jehovah's rule—an idea which appears in germinal form in Am. 9 and was characteristic of the prophets of the earlier part of the Persian period. The qualifications of a true worshipper of Jehovah are also defined in the next stanza in accordance with the principles laid down by the pre-exilic prophets, rather than in accordance with primitive Heb. thought or even of that of later Judaism. Each element, therefore, in the ps. was eminently appropriate in connection with the dedication of the second temple in 516 B.C., and this dating accords well with its position in the Psalter. Its simple, vigorous style and its exultant spirit support this conclusion. The ps. was probably written to be recited by the people and the priests as the procession stood before the temple.

[c] 24^{4} Lit., *who hath not lifted up himself to falsehood*. A scribe has added the explanatory clause, *hath not sworn to lie*. His meaning evidently is that the worshipper had not borne false testimony against his neighbor. According to Heb. standards the vs. represents a rising climax: His hands were guiltless, his heart was pure, and he had done no wrong against his neighbor.

[d] 24^{5} *I. e.*, that moral righteousness which qualifies one for admission to the sanctuary.

[e] 24^{6} *I. e.*, the type of man who was worthy to enter the presence of the divine King.

[f] 24^{6} So Gk. and Lat., supported by Syr.

§ 44. Jehovah's Universal Reign, Ps. 47

Call to praise Jehovah

Ps. 47 [1]Clap your hands, all ye peoples,
Shout to Jehovah with a voice of triumph;
[2]For Jehovah Most High[g] is awe-inspiring,
The great King over all the earth.

His past achievements for his people

[3]He subdued[h] the peoples under us,
And nations under our feet.
[4]He chose our inheritance for us,
The excellency of Jacob which he loveth.

His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem

[5]Jehovah[i] hath gone up with a shout,
Jehovah amid the sound of trumpets.
[6]Sing praises to Jehovah, sing praises;
Sing praises to our King, sing praises.

His world-wide reign

[7]Since he is king over all the earth,[j]
To Jehovah sing with a skilful song.
[8]Jehovah reigneth over the nations,
Jehovah sitteth upon his holy throne.

The homage paid him by all peoples

[9]The nobles of the people are gathered together,
With[k] the people of the God of Abraham;
For the shields of the earth[l] are Jehovah's;
Greatly exalted is he.

§ 45. Jehovah's Majestic Rule of the Universe, Ps. 93

Jehovah's rule eternal

Ps. 93 [1]Jehovah reigneth,
Clothed in majesty as with a garment,
Jehovah hath girded himself with strength.

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§ 44 This ps. is related both to 24 and the group of kingly pss. in 93–100. The warlike spirit in [5] possibly points to the Maccabean era, but it is the triumph of an omnipotent God, not of a warrior, which is here proclaimed. The ps. was evidently written to be used in connection with a feast, possibly that of trumpets, as is suggested by [5]. Its background is a period of confidence and rejoicing and exaltation. The peaceful days following the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah furnish a natural background. Its spirit is also that of II Isaiah.

[g] 47[2] According to Philo Byblius, the Phœnicians used *Eliom* as a name for God. Aside from Nu. 24[16], where it is employed by Balaam, its use as a designation of Jehovah is confined to the post-exilic writings.

[h] 47[3] Lit., *spoke*.

[i] 47[5] Heb., *God*, and so throughout the rest of the ps.

[j] 47[7] Possibly this line is secondary, as it is only a variant of the first line of [8].

[k] 47[9] Supplying the preposition *with* from the Gk. and Syr. It is evidently omitted by a scribe because it has in Heb. the same radicals as the following word for *people*.

[l] 47[9] *I. e.*, the kings of the earth. Cf. Ps. 89[18], where Jehovah is spoken of as the shield of his people.

§ 45 This majestic ps. has many points of contact with II Isaiah. Cf. [1] and Is. 51[9], 52[1]; [2] and Is. 44[7], 45[21], 46[3, 5, 9, 10]. It is closely connected with 97 and 99 by the initial phrase, *Jehovah reigneth*. The psalmist clearly had in mind the vision of Jehovah, the divine King, seated on his throne, that made a profound impression upon the young Isaiah (Is. 6). Instead of the seraphim, the primeval floods here bear testimony to Jehovah's might and majesty. The first four vss. constitute a complete unit. While the poem may be very old, it was probably suggested by contemplation of the picture of creation in Gen. 1. Its thought and symbolism are akin to the pow-

Thou[m] hast established the world immovable.
^{2}Thy throne is established of old,
From eternity art thou.

Acclaimed by all nature

^{3}The floods lifted up, O Jehovah,
The floods have lifted up their voice,
The floods lift up their waves,
^{4}More than the voices of many waters,
Mightier than the breakers of the sea:
'Highly exalted art thou, O Jehovah,
^{5}Thy testimonies are exceedingly sure,
Holiness becometh thy house,
Thou, O Jehovah, art eternal.'

§ 46. Jehovah the Creator and Ruler of His People, Ps. 95

Creator and ruler of the universe

Ps. 95 ^{1}Oh come, let us sing to Jehovah,
Let us cry aloud to the rock of our salvation,
^{2}Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
Let us cry aloud to him with psalms,
^{3}For Jehovah is a great God,
And a great King above all gods.
^{4}In his hand are the depths of the earth,
The heights of the mountains are his also.
^{5}The sea is his, and he made it,
And his hands formed the dry land.

Let his people worship him

^{6}Oh come, let us worship and bow down,
Let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker;
^{7}For he, indeed, is our God,
And we are his people[n] and the sheep of his hand.

Be not disloyal as in the past

To-day, if ye will hear his voice;[o]
^{8}Harden not your heart as at Meribah,
As in the day of Massah in the wilderness,

---

erful poems which come from the middle and latter part of the Persian period. The last vs., which focuses the attention on Israel's law and ceremonial institutions, is in contrast to the broad universalism of the rest of the ps. In its present structure the ps. is closely parallel to Ps. 19, where a fervent poem in praise of the law is appended to a nature ps. It reveals the spirit and convictions of the later Jews, who regarded natural phenomena and the law as kindred and the highest revelations of Jehovah's character and will. This conviction had taken possession of the Jews during the closing years of the Persian period, so that it is not impossible that the ps. in its present form comes from the same author, although it is probable that the last vs. was added by a later editor to adapt it to a liturgical use in connection with the temple.

[m] 93^{1} So the VSS. Cf. 75^{3}, *I* (Jehovah) *hold up the pillars* (of the earth). Heb., *The world is established.*

§ 46 This ps., like the others in the group to which it belongs, comes either from the latter part of the Persian or from the Gk. period. Vss. $^{7c-11}$ are regarded by many as secondary, but they complete the logical unity of the ps. and it is more probable that they are from the original author than the work of a later editor. They illustrate the concreteness which distinguishes the Oriental from the Occidental poet.

[n] 95^{7} So Syr. and certain Heb. MSS. So also 100^{3}. Heb., *people of his pasture.*

[o] 95^{7c-11} Cf., for a variant of this theme, 81^{7-12}.

[9]When your fathers tempted me,
Proved me, and saw my work.
[10]Forty years was I grieved with that[p] generation,
And said, 'They are a people erring in heart
And they do not know my ways.'
[11]So I swore in my wrath,
That they should not enter into my resting place.

§ 47. Proclamation of Jehovah's Universal Rule, Ps. 96

Exordium

Ps. 96 [1]Oh sing to Jehovah a new song;
Sing to Jehovah, all the earth.
[2]Sing to Jehovah, bless his name,
Proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
[3]Declare his glory among the nations,
His marvellous deeds among all the peoples.

Jehovah's majesty

[4]For great is Jehovah, and most worthy of praise,
He is to be revered above all gods,
[5]For all the gods of the peoples are worthless,[q]
But it is Jehovah who made the heavens.
[6]Majesty and splendor are in his presence,
Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Call to all the nations to join in paying him homage

[7]Ascribe to Jehovah, ye families of the peoples,
Ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength.
[8]Ascribe to Jehovah the glory due his name;
Bring an offering, and come into his courts.
[9]Oh worship Jehovah in holy ornaments,[r]
Dance[s] before him, all the earth.
[10]Say among the nations, 'Jehovah reigneth,[t]
He it is who will judge the peoples with equity.'

To all created things

[11]Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice;
Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof,
[12]Let the field exult, and all that is therein,

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[p] 95[10] So Gk., Lat., and Syr.

§ 47 Pss. 96 and 98 are introduced by the same striking formula and are closely related in spirit and theme. It is possible that they were originally one ps., for 98 develops the thought of 96. The fact that Ps. 96 is quoted in I Chr. 16[23-33] suggests, although it does not conclusively prove, that it comes from the Gk. period.

[q] 96[5] *I. e.*, are nothing and do nothing for their worshippers. The idea is a familiar one in the post-exilic writers. Cf. Lev. 19[4], 26[1], and Ps. 97[7].

[r] 96[9] Lit., *splendor*, as in [6]. The reference is to the garments and ornaments to be worn by the worshippers. These must be suited to the worship of the divine King.

[s] 96[9] Lit., *whirl*, *i. e.*, in the dance. *All the earth* means its inhabitants.

[t] 96[10] The parallel text in I Chr. 16[30] here departs widely from the order. Vs. [10b] is lacking and [10a] follows [11a]. Vs. [10b] is also but a repetition of 93[1c], *The world also is established immovable.* It not only introduces an extra line but is also out of harmony with the context so that it must be regarded as secondary.

Let every tree of the forest sing for joy,[u]
13 Before Jehovah, for he cometh to judge the earth.[v]

§ 48. A Call to Praise Jehovah for His Righteousness, Ps. 98

Jehovah's revelation of his power to deliver

Ps. 98 1 Oh sing to Jehovah a new song,
For he hath done marvellous things:
His right hand hath gotten him the victory,
His holy arm hath helped[w] him.
2 Jehovah hath made known his victory,
His righteousness hath he revealed before the nations.
3 He hath remembered his kindness to Jacob,[x]
And his faithfulness to the house of Israel.[y]

Let all nature praise his just rule

4 Shout to Jehovah, all the earth,
Break forth, exult, and make melody,
5 Make melody to Jehovah with the lyre,
With the lyre and the sound of melody.
6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn,
Shout before the King, Jehovah.
7 Let the sea roar, and all that it contains,
The world, and they who dwell therein,
8 Let the streams clap their hands,
Let the mountains in unison sing joyously,
9 For he cometh[z] to judge the earth;
He will judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with equity.

§ 49. Jehovah's Just and Holy Rule, Ps. 99

Jehovah's just and universal rule in Zion

Ps. 99 1 Jehovah reigneth; let the peoples tremble,
He sitteth enthroned;[a] let the earth quake.
2 Jehovah is great in Zion,
Exalted is he above all the peoples.
3 Let them praise thy great and terrible name,
Holy and strong is he,
4 He doth reign;[b] he loveth justice.

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[u] 96[12] The parallel in I Chr. 16[33] unites the clause, *before Jehovah*, with this line.

[v] 96[13] So the parallel in I Chr. 16[33], and this forms the logical conclusion to the ps. A scribe has by mistake repeated the *for he cometh* and added, from 98[9], *He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in faithfulness*.

[w] 98[1] Supplying the necessary verb, which has apparently been omitted by a copyist because of its similarity to the Heb. word for *arm*.

[x] 98[3] So Gk. Heb. omits *to Jacob*, required by the parallelism.

[y] 98[3] A scribe has added, from Is. 52[10], the five-beat line: *all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God*. It destroys the metrical symmetry of the vs. and was probably suggested by [4a].

[z] 98[9] So Gk. Heb. adds, destroying the metre, *before Jehovah*. This clause was probably introduced from [6] for the sake of clearness.

[a] 99[1] A scribe has added *cherubim*.

[b] 99[4] Following Briggs in translating the Heb. as a verb. The current reading, *king*, is not in harmony with the context.

It is thou[c] who dost establish equity,
Thou executest justice and righteousness.[d]
5Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
And worship at his footstool, for[e] he is holy.

Of his people in the past

6Moses and Aaron among his priests,
And Samuel among those who called upon his name;
They called upon Jehovah, and he answered them,
7He kept speaking to them in the pillar of cloud;
They kept his testimonies, and the statute that he gave them,
8Thou answeredst them, O Jehovah our God,
Thou wast a God that forgave them,
Though thou tookest vengeance on their misdeeds.

Doxology

9Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
And worship toward his holy mountain,
For holy is Jehovah, our God.

§ 50. Jehovah's Care for His People, Ps. 97

Jehovah's advent as king

Ps. 97 1Jehovah reigneth; let the earth rejoice,
Let the many coast-lands be glad.
2Clouds and darkness are about him,
Righteousness[f] is the foundation of his throne.
3A fire goeth before him,
And blazeth round about his steps.[g]
4His lightnings illumine the world,
The earth doth see and tremble.[h]
5The mountains melt like wax[i]
At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
6The heavens declare his righteousness,
And all the peoples see his glory.[j]

The rejoicing of his people

8Zion heard and was glad,
And the daughters of Judah rejoiced,
Because of thy judgments, O Jehovah.

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[c] 99[4] Possibly the abrupt change to the second person in this couplet is due to a scribe.
[d] 99[4] Heb. adds *in Jacob*.
[e] 99[5] So certain Heb. MSS. and Gk., supported by the analogy in [9]. Traditional Heb. omits *for*.

§ 50 This ps. is connected with 93 and 99 by the same impressive introductory formula: *Jehovah reigneth*. Each of these pss. presents a vivid, majestic picture of Jehovah enthroned on high, ruling the universe in accordance with the principles of justice and righteousness. Few pss. in the Psalter express more nobly the spirit of worship. Nowhere in human literature is theology taught more impressively and effectively.

[f] 97[2] Heb. adds *and justice*.
[g] 97[3] Correcting the Heb. text, which reads, *burneth up his adversaries*.
[h] 97[4] Lit., *was in anguish* or *writhed round about*. But this distinctive note is foreign to the ps.
[i] 97[5] As the result of dittography or for purpose of explanation, the Heb. adds *at the presence of Jehovah*.
[j] 97[6] Into this highly poetic ps. a later scribe has inserted the exhortation: *Let all of them be put to shame who serve graven images, who boast of idols. Worship him, all ye gods.*

[9]For thou[k] art most high above all the earth,
Thou art exalted far above all gods.

[10]Jehovah loveth[l] those who hate evil, **Jehovah's care for the righteous**
He preserveth the lives of his saints,
He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.
[11]Light shineth forth for the righteous,
And gladness for the upright in heart.
[12]Be glad in Jehovah, ye righteous,
And give thanks in commemoration of his holiness.

§ 51. Universal Homage to Be Paid to Jehovah by Future Generations, Ps. 22^{27-31}

Ps. 22 [27]All the ends of the earth will remember and will turn to Jehovah, **His universal dominion**
And all the families of the nations will worship in his presence;
[28]For the dominion belongeth to Jehovah and he ruleth over the nations.
[29]Verily, him alone will all the prosperous of the earth[m] worship,
Before him all those about to go down to the dust[n] will bow,
[30]A seed will serve him, it will be told[o] to a generation [31]to come,[p]
And they will declare his righteousness that he hath accomplished to a people yet to be born.

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[k] 97^9 Heb. adds *Jehovah*.
[l] 97^{10} So the VSS. The Heb. is clearly due to a verbal error.
§ 51 This brief ps. was evidently added to the ps. which preceded it, 22^{1-26}, to adapt it to liturgical uses. The connection with the preceding, however, is very loose. The metre is the five-beat rather than the three-beat measure. The theme and spirit are also fundamentally different. Here Israel's missionary hope is clearly expressed. All nations, both the weak and the strong, are soon to come and worship Jehovah.
It is difficult to fix definitely the date of this ps. Its liturgical character, its relation to the preceding ps., which is in itself late, and the wide hope here expressed, all suggest that it is one of the latest pss. in the Psalter. The later Gk. or Maccabean period furnishes the most natural historical background.
[m] 22^{29} Dividing the Heb. letters as the context requires. The ordinary translation, *they have eaten*, makes little sense.
[n] 22^{29} *I. e.*, those who are on the verge of starvation and death, in contrast to *the fat ones of the earth*, in the parallel line. A scribe has added, in order to explain this unusual phrase, the words, *even he who doth not keep himself alive*.
[o] 22^{30} Slightly correcting the Heb. text in accordance with the Gk. and Syr.
[p] 22^{31} Again following the Gk., supported by the Syr., and joining the first word of [31] to [30].

HYMNS OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

I. FOR JEHOVAH'S JUST AND GRACIOUS RULE

Pss. 9, $57^{5, 7-11}$, 75, 113, 92, 107, 145, 33, 138

II. THANKSGIVING FOR JEHOVAH'S GUIDANCE AND CARE IN ISRAEL'S PAST

Pss. 105, 114, 111, 117

III. THANKSGIVING FOR RECENT NATIONAL DELIVERANCES

Pss. 18, 66^{1-12}, 68, 76, 124, 126, 118

IV. THANKSGIVING FOR JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE

Pss. 48, 84, 87

V. PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR PERSONAL DELIVERANCES

Ps. 30, Jon. 2^{2-9}, Pss. 66^{13-20}, 116

VI. LITURGICAL HYMNS

Pss. 81^{1-5}, 100, 115, 134, 135, 136, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150

HYMNS OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

I

FOR JEHOVAH'S JUST AND GRACIOUS RULE

Pss. 9, 57[5, 7-11], 75, 113, 92, 107, 145, 33, 138

§ 52. Gratitude for the Evidences of Jehovah's Justice, Ps. 9

Ps. 9 [1]With my whole heart I give thanks to Jehovah, — Thanksgiving for deliverance
I recount all thy marvellous deeds,
[2]I rejoice and exult in thee,
I sing praise, O Most High, to thy name,
[3]Because my foes have turned back,[a]
They stumble and perish at thy presence.

[4]For thou hast maintained my right and my cause, — Jehovah's judgment upon the wicked
Thou didst sit on the throne judging righteously.
[5]Thou didst rebuke the heathen, thou didst destroy the wicked,

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Psalms of Thanksgiving.—The distinction between the pss. of praise and thanksgiving and those of adoration and trust is not always clearly drawn. Although they are closely related, there is, however, a fundamental difference. The pss. of adoration voice the feelings of the psalmists as they contemplated the gracious character of Jehovah, revealed in the life of the nation, in nature, and in his care for mankind; while the pss. of praise and thanksgiving express the gratitude which the individual or nation felt for definite services performed by Jehovah in their behalf. In the pss. of praise and thanksgiving some national deliverance or signal experience is usually in the mind of the psalmist, or else they were written for liturgical use. As a rule, therefore, these pss. are more national and less individualistic than the pss. of adoration.

The Hebrews conceived of thanksgiving as a form of offering pleasing to Jehovah. It is often compared with sacrifice and other concrete forms of expressing allegiance to their divine King. The pleasure which Jehovah was thought to take in praise is suggested by Ps. 30[9]:

What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit?
Can the dust praise thee, and make known thy faithfulness?

No one can question that there is an ultimate truth in this naïve, primitive conception. The infinite God does not depend for his joy upon the gratitude of mankind; but, from all analogies between the human and divine Father, there is reason to believe that he delights in the sincere thanks of his children and, above all, in that development in their character which comes from the spontaneous and joyous expression of the innate and yet divine impulse of gratitude.

§ 52 This ps. bears the title, *For the chief musician. To be sung by male soprano voices* (following a revised text). *Psalm of David.* Originally Pss. 9 and 10 constituted one alphabetical ps. Ps. 10 has no superscription in the Heb., and the two pss. are joined in Gk. texts. They were evidently divided for liturgical purposes. Only half the alphabetical strophes can now be clearly distinguished. The metre also frequently changes from the three to the four-beat measure, indicating that the original poem has been recast, especially in vss. [7-10], 10[1-11], by a later editor. Many attempts have been made to recover the original acrostic ps., but the resulting text is only conjectural. The logical connection of thought does not always follow the alphabetical strophic division, so that in the above analysis the acrostic structure has been ignored.

The artificial structure of the ps. points to a post-exilic date. The wicked in the community are arrogantly persecuting the afflicted righteous, 10[2], and are uttering their sceptical taunts, as in the book of Mal. 3[13-15]. Cf. 10[4-6]. Jehovah is enthroned in his temple in Mount Zion. Evidently the background of this ps., like most of those in the first Davidic collection, is the discouraging days just before the appearance of Nehemiah.

[a] 9[3] The allusion is evidently to some definite event.

Thou didst blot out their name for ever and ever.
6 As for the foes[b]—their swords[c] have disappeared forever,
And the cities thou hast destroyed—their memory hath perished.

His just rule

Behold,[d] 7 Jehovah is enthroned forever,
He hath set up his throne for judgment;
8 He it is who judgeth the world in righteousness,
He passeth judgment upon the peoples with equity.

A refuge to the afflicted

9 Jehovah is a refuge[e] to the oppressed,
A place of refuge in times of distress,
10 And they who know thy name[f] trust in thee,
For thou, O Jehovah,[g] dost not forsake those who seek thee.

Praise due him

11 Make melody to Jehovah who is enthroned in Zion,
Among the peoples declare his deeds,
12 For he who avengeth bloodshed doth remember them,
He doth not forget the distressed cry of the afflicted.[h]

Cry for deliverance

13 Be gracious to me, O Jehovah, see my affliction,
Thou who liftest me up from the gates of death,[i]
14 In order that I may recite all thy praises,[j]
That in the gates of Zion[k] I may exult in thy help.

Retribution

15 The proud[l] are sunk down in the pit they have made,
In the net which they hid their own feet are caught.
16 Jehovah hath made himself known by doing judgment;
By the work of their hands the wicked are trapped.[m]

Judgment and vindication

17 The wicked shall surely go back to Sheol,
All the proud[n] who are forgetful of God;
18 For the poor are not forgotten forever,
Nor the hopes of the afflicted lost for all time.

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[b] 9^6 Heb., *the foe*, a collective noun representing all of Israel's foes and especially the early Canaanites.

[c] 9^6 So Gk., Syr., and several MSS. Heb., *ruins*. The above translation is also strongly supported by this parallelism.

[d] 9^6 Heb., *they*, but a slight change gives the above.

[e] 9^9 Lit., *high, inaccessible place*.

[f] 9^{10} *Name* in Heb. stands for the true self, the real character.

[g] 9^{10} Possibly *Jehovah* is a scribal addition.

[h] 9^{12} Or, *poor*.

[i] 9^{13} The Heb. adds *from those who hate me;* but this fits very awkwardly in its context and appears to be a later explanatory gloss.

[j] 9^{14} The Heb. has here the title of the pss. Possibly the poet has in mind the pss. in use in his day.

[k] 9^{14} Lit., *daughter of Zion*.

[l] 9^{15} Following Duhm (*Psalmen*, p. 30), in slightly correcting the text, as required by the context. Cf. [16]. The Heb. has the more common word *heathen*. Possibly this is due to a Maccabean scribe.

[m] 9^{16} The Heb. inserts at the end of this line, *higgaion selah*.

[n] 9^{17} Making the same slight correction in the Heb. as in [15], so that it reads *proud* instead of *heathen*. Here again the context supports the correction.

19 Arise, Jehovah, let not man prevail,
Let the nations be judged in thy presence,
20 Yea, upon them send terror,[o] O Jehovah,
That the nations may know that they are but men.

Prayer for divine judgment

§ 53. Thanksgiving for Jehovah's Goodness, Ps. 57[5, 7-11]

Ps. 57 5 Be exalted above the heavens, O Jehovah,[p] above all the earth be thy glory.

Refrain

7 My mind is fixed, O Jehovah, my mind is fixed.
I will sing and melody will I make; 8 awake, my lyre,[q]
Awake, my harp and lyre, let me waken the dawn.

Sing praise with harp and song

9 I will thank thee, O Jehovah,[r] among the peoples,[s] I will praise thee among the nations;
10 For thy lovingkindness is greater than the heavens, and thy faithfulness than the skies.[t]

God's goodness fills heaven

11 Be exalted above the heavens, O Jehovah; above all the earth be thy glory.

Refrain

§ 54. Jehovah's Impartial Rule, Ps. 75

Ps. 75 1 We give thanks to thee, O God,
We give thanks and call on[u] thy name,
We tell of thy wondrous works.

Exordium

2 'When[v] I find a suitable time,[w]
I indeed judge uprightly.

Jehovah's assertion of his moral rule

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o 9[20] Gk. and Syr., *a teacher*, from a kindred root.

§ 53 The brief fifty-seventh ps. contains two independent poems on absolutely distinct themes, which reflect widely different situations. Ps. 57[7-11] is repeated in 108[1-4], indicating that it was once an independent unit. The refrain in [11] is repeated in [5] and probably originally stood both at the beginning and end of the second poem. In this respect the ps. resembles 8, which has the same refrain at the beginning and end. The broad outlook, the happy, trustful spirit, and an atmosphere like that of the II Is. indicate that this brief poem was probably written during the latter part of the Persian period, when the Jewish community experienced the results of Nehemiah's reforms.

p 57[5] Heb., *God*, which probably stands for an original *Jehovah*, which has been restored.

q 57[8] So one Heb. MS. and Syr., supported by the parallelism. Heb., *my glory;* but the parallel 108[2] has a variant reading indicating that the text is corrupt.

r 59[9] So the parallel, 108[3]. The Heb. of [9] has *Lord.*

s 57[9] The parallel 108[3] adds *and.*

t 57[10] An echo of 36[5].

§ 54 This is one of the more difficult and obscure pss. of the Psalter. It abounds in vigorous figures drawn from the earlier prophets. For the cup of judgment in the hands of Jehovah, cf. Jer. 25[15], 49[12], Lam. 4[21], Ezek. 23[33, 34], and Is. 51[17]. Arrogant, malicious foes rise prominently on the psalmist's horizon. The wicked are lifting up their horns, that is, attacking the people of Jehovah. Possibly the ps. comes from the period just before Nehemiah, but its apocalyptic style and the hope expressed in the concluding line, that the horns of the righteous will be lifted up, point to the earlier years of the Maccabean struggle.

u 75[1] Restoring the Heb. with the aid of the Gk. and Syr.

v 75[2] An oracle of Jehovah is here abruptly introduced. The Heb. verb means, lit., *set.* How long the persecuted Jews must suffer until the appointed time should arrive when Jehovah would overthrow their foes is the burning question in the closing chapters of the book of Daniel, which comes from the same period.

w 75[2] Lit., *seize an appointed time.*

3The earth and all its inhabitants melt away,
But it is I who set up its pillars.
4I say to the boastful, "Boast not";
To the wicked, "Lift not up thy horn."'[x]

The psalmist's assertion of the justice of Jehovah's rule

5Lift not up your horn on high,
Speak not with a stiff neck;[y]
6For neither from the east nor the west,
And not from the wilderness nor the mountains,[z]
7But God, he, indeed, is judge;
He abaseth one and lifteth up another.
8For a cup is in the hands of Jehovah
Of foaming wine, full of mixed wine,
And he extendeth it to this one and that one,[a]
And its dregs all the wicked of the earth must drain.[b]

Thanksgiving for his just rule

9But I indeed will exult[c] forever,
I will make melody to the God of Jacob;
10For all the horns of the wicked will be cut off,
But the horns[d] of the righteous will be lifted up.[e]

§ 55. Jehovah's Gracious Condescension to the Humble, Ps. 113

Call to praise Jehovah

Ps. 113 1Praise Jehovah, ye servants,[f] praise his[g] name,
2Blessed be the name of Jehovah from now and evermore,
3From the rising of the sun to its setting Jehovah's name is to be praised.

Who is unique in his condescension

4Jehovah is high above all nations, his glory above the heavens.
5Who is like Jehovah our God, he who dwelleth on high,[h]
6Who stoopeth to behold the things[i] that are in heaven and in the earth!

Who exalteth and restoreth his exiled people

7He who raiseth up the poor out of the dust,[j] and the needy from the dunghill,

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[x] 75^{4} The horn was the symbol of power exerted. In Zech.'s vision, 1^{18-21}, *the horns of the nations* represented that with which they attacked the Jews.

[y] 75^{5} Or, slightly revising the Heb., *speak not arrogantly against thy Rock*. Gk., *against God*.

[z] 75^{6} Slightly revising the Heb., which is unintelligible. The broken context implies that some such word as deliverance is implied, but the omission is even more impressive.

[a] 75^{8} Following the Gk., which reads, lit., *from this one to that one*.

[b] 75^{8} Heb. adds *drink;* but this is probably a note appended by a scribe to explain the preceding verb.

[c] 75^{9} So Gk. Heb., *I will declare*.

[d] 75^{10} Revising the Heb. text, which reads, *and all the horns of the wicked*.

[e] 75^{10} The context requires a passive verb, but the Heb. reads, *I will cut off*.

§ 55 This Hallel ps. was sung, together with 114–118, at the feasts of Dedication and New Moon. It echoes the thought of Mal. and II Is. and has points of contact with the songs sung by the Jewish community during the latter part of the Persian period. Vs. [7] is quoted from I Sam. 2^{8} and may possibly be secondary. Vs. [9] is an echo of Is. 54^{1}. Like the other Hallel pss., this probably comes in its complete form from the Gk. period.

[f] 113^{1} So. Gk., Aquila, Sym., Theod., and Lat. Heb., *servants of Jehovah*. The reference is evidently to Jehovah's faithful worshippers.

[g] 113^{1} So certain Gk. MSS. supported by the metre. Heb., *name of Jehovah*.

[h] 113^{5} Lit., *he who exalteth himself to sit enthroned*.

[i] 113^{6} Supplying the word *things*, implied by the context.

[j] 113^{7} So the parallel in I Sam. 2^{8}.

[8]That he may seat him with princes, with the princes of his people.
[9]He maketh the barren woman to keep house, to be the glad mother of children.[k]

§ 56. Jehovah's Benign Direction of Human History, Ps. 92

Jehovah worthy of men's praise

Ps. 92 [1]It is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah,
And to sing praises to thy name, O Most High;
[2]To make known thy lovingkindness in the morning,
Likewise thy faithfulness every night,
[3]With an instrument of ten strings and with the lyre,
With a solemn sound upon the harp.
[4]O Jehovah, thou hast made me glad through thy deeds,
I exult in the works of thy hands.

His overthrow of the wicked

[5]How great are thy works,[l] O Jehovah!
Thy thoughts are exceedingly deep.
[6]An unreceptive man knoweth not,
Neither doth a fool understand this:
[7]When the wicked sprout forth as the grass,
And when all the workers of iniquity blossom,
It is that they may be destroyed forever.
[8]For thou art on high, O Jehovah, forever;
[9]For, lo, thine enemies shall perish,[m]
All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

His care of the upright

[10]And my horn thou hast exalted like the wild ox,
Yea, thou hast anointed me[n] with fresh oil.
[11]Mine eye also hath seen my foes,[o]
Mine ears have heard evil-doers.
[12]The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree,
He shall grow tall like a cedar in Lebanon.
[13]Planted in the house of Jehovah,
They shall flourish in the courts of our God.
[14]In old age they shall bring forth fruit,
They shall be full of sap and green,
[15]To show that Jehovah is upright.
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

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[k] 113[9] The Heb. text adds *praise Jehovah*, but this is evidently the superscription of the next ps., which otherwise is lacking.

§ 56 This ps. was written by one of the regular worshippers at the Jerusalem temple. It voices the experience of the Judean community. Cf., *e. g.*, [11]. Hostile foes are about, but faith in Jehovah gives peace. The distinctive wisdom teaching in the second stanza recalls the thought of Pr. and indicates that the ps. was probably written during the latter part of the Gk. period. Its superscription, *To the Musical Director*, indicates that it was used and probably originally written to be sung in the temple service.

[l] 92[5] So Syr. Targ. and several Heb. texts, *works*. Heb., *deed*.

[m] 92[9] So Gk.B and three Heb. MSS. Heb. repeats *for behold thy enemies, O Jehovah*, but this is probably due to a scribal gloss.

[n] 92[10] So Syr. Heb., *I am anointed*.

[o] 92[11] The text has been expanded, probably through a scribal error.

§ 57. Jehovah's Power and Readiness to Deliver, Ps. 107

Jehovah's redemption of his people

Ps. 107 [1]O give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[2]Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so,
Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
[3]And gathered together out of the lands,
From the east and the west, from the north and the south.[p]

From perils of the desert

[4]Straying[q] in the wilderness, in the desert,[r]
They found no way to an inhabited city.
[5]Hungry, yea, and thirsty,
Their soul was fainting within them.
[6]Then they cried to Jehovah in their trouble,
That he might deliver them out of their distresses.
[7]Then he made them walk a straight way,
That they might go to an inhabited city.
[8]Let them give thanks to Jehovah for his lovingkindness,
And his wonderful works for the children of men!
[9]For he satisfieth the longing soul,
And the hungry soul he filleth with good.

From imprisonment

[10]Dwelling in darkness and in gloom,
Being bound in affliction and iron,
[11]Because they rebelled against the words of God,
And despised the counsel of the Most High,
[12]He brought down their heart with labor,
They stumbled, and there was no one to help them.

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§ 57 This ps. contains a strong liturgical element and is characterized by a strophic as well as vs. rhythm. A marked peculiarity is that the refrain:

Let them give thanks to Jehovah for his lovingkindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men,

which recurs in [8, 15, 21, 31], does not appear at the end of the strophe, but is in each case followed by a concluding couplet. The same syntactical construction is found in each of the stanzas. The original ps. apparently ended with [32]. Vss. [33-42] contain general illustrations of Jehovah's goodness and justice. Part of these are drawn from Job and other poetic books. They show unmistakable influence of the wisdom school and are didactic in their purpose. They preserve the metrical structure followed in the rest of the ps. and constitute a fitting conclusion. The epilogue in [43] is modelled after the similar epilogue in Hos. 14[10] and is intended as an index hand to call attention to the fundamental teachings embodied in the ps. The original ps. was inspired by the contemplation of II Is. and by the experiences of the generation to which the psalmist belonged. The horizon is not limited to Palestine but includes the distant lands of the dispersion. In imagination the reader beholds caravans making long journeys through the parched, trackless desert far away from inhabited cities. He shares their joy as at last they are guided to the populous, well-watered city, which is the goal of their pilgrimage. He sees captives dragged into distant exile living the life of slaves, in bonds, and afflicted by the lash of the taskmaster. Again the vision changes and he shares the trials and the perils of the sailors helplessly tossed by the storm. If not written in one of the lands of the dispersion this ps. is certainly from one who had travelled widely and observed closely and himself participated in the life that lay beyond the bounds of Palestine. There is no suggestion of the stress and struggle of the Maccabean period. The ps. comes rather from the Gk. period, when the life and thought of the Jews of the dispersion were even more important than those of Palestinian Judaism.

[p] 107[3] This vs. is unmetrical and loosely connected with the context. It may be a later scribal note. The parallelism demands the change from Heb., *west to south*, at the end of the vs.

[q] 107[4] So in [10, 17, 23]. Heb., *they strayed*.

[r] 107[4] So Gk. and Syr. and the implications of the context.

13 Then they cried to Jehovah in their trouble,
That he might save them out of their distresses.
14 He brought them out of darkness and gloom,
And broke their bonds in sunder.
15 Let them give thanks to Jehovah for his lovingkindness,
And for his wonderful works for the children of men!
16 For he hath broken the gates of brass,
And hewed bars of iron in sunder.

From sickness and distress

17 Fools because of their transgression,
And because of their iniquities are afflicted.
18 Their appetite abhorreth all food,
And they draw near to the gates of death.
19 Then they cry to Jehovah in their trouble,
That he may save them out of their distresses.
20 He sendeth his word, and healeth them,
And delivereth their life from destruction.[s]
21 Let them give thanks to Jehovah for his lovingkindness,
And for his wonderful works for the children of men!
22 And let them offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And recount his works with singing.

From perils of the sea

23 Those who go to the sea in ships,
Who do business in great waters;
24 These see the works of Jehovah,
And his wonders performed in the deep.
25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the wind,[t]
And the tempest lifteth up its waves.
26 They mount heavenward, they go down into the depths,
Their soul melteth because of trouble,
27 They reel and stagger like a drunken man,
And all their skill is exhausted.[u]
28 Then they cry to Jehovah in their trouble,
That he may bring them out of their distresses.
29 He maketh the storm a calm,
So that the waves of the sea[v] are still.
30 Then they are glad because they are quiet;
So he bringeth them to their desired haven.
31 Let them give thanks to Jehovah for his kindness,
For his wonderful works to the children of men!
32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people,
And praise him in the session of the elders.

General illustrations of Jehovah's justice

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness,
And water springs into a thirsty ground;

[s] 107[20] Revising the Heb. as the text requires. Heb., *from their destructions.*
[t] 107[25] Dividing the vs. as the metre and parallelism demand.
[u] 107[27] Lit., *swallows itself up.*
[v] 107[29] So Syr.

34 A fruitful land into a salt desert,[w]
For the wickedness of them that dwell therein;
35 He turneth a wilderness into a pool,[x]
And a dry land into watersprings.
36 And there he causeth the hungry to dwell,
And maketh it an inhabited city.
37 And they sow fields, and set out vineyards,
And get them the fruits of increase.
38 He blesseth them so that they are greatly multiplied,
And he suffereth not their cattle to decrease.
39 But when they are diminished and bowed down
Through oppression, trouble, and sorrow,[y]
41 Then the needy he lifteth out of his affliction,
And maketh his families like a flock.[z]
42 The upright see it, and are glad,
And all iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

Epilogue

43 Who is wise, let him heed these things,
And let him consider the kind deeds of Jehovah.

§ 58. Jehovah's Justice and Beneficence, Ps. 145

Exordium

Ps. 145 1 I will extol thee, my God, O King,
And I will bless thy name forever.
2 All the day long will I bless thee,
And I will praise thy name forever.

Jehovah's majesty and mighty deeds

3 Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised,
Yea, his greatness is unsearchable.
4 One generation will laud thy works to another,
And will declare thy deeds of might.
5 On the glorious splendor of thy majesty,[a]
And thy wondrous works will they meditate.[b]
6 And they will speak of the might of thy terrible acts,
And recount how great[c] are thy deeds.

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[w] 107^{34} The reference is probably to the destruction of Sodom and the cities of the plains, recounted in Gen. 19.

[x] 107^{35} Lit., *pool of water*.

[y] 107^{39} The next vs.:

He poureth contempt upon princes,
And causes them to wander in the waste, where there is no way,

is clearly a very late insertion based on Job. $12^{21, 24b}$, for it separates [39] from its immediate sequel, [41].

[z] 107^{41} *I. e.*, increase rapidly.

§ 58 This is an acrostic ps.: each succeeding vs. begins with a succeeding letter of the Heb. alphabet except that one, which the Gk. attempts to supply, has been lost. It is the most original of the nine acrostic pss. of the Psalter. At the same time it draws freely from the older pss. and prophetic books. Its universalism and didactic purpose connect it with similar writings of the Gk. period. The thought in [13] which reappears in Dan. $4^{3, 34}$ seems to be native to the ps. In any case both of these writings probably come from the middle of the Gk. period.

[a] 145^5 So Gk. Heb. is corrupt.

[b] 145^5 So Gk.

[c] 145^6 So another Heb. reading.

7They will herald the fame[d] of thy great goodness, His goodness
And will sing aloud of thy righteousness.
8Jehovah is gracious, and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness.
9Jehovah is good to all,
And his tender mercies[e] are over all his works.
10All thy works will praise thee, O Jehovah,
And thy saints will bless thee.

11They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, His everlasting rule
And talk continually of thy power,
12To make known to men his mighty acts,
And the glorious splendor of thy[f] kingdom.
13Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

14Jehovah upholdeth all who fall, His care for the needy
And raiseth up all those who are bowed down.
15The eyes of all wait for thee,
And thou givest[g] their food in due season.
16Thou,[h] it is, who openest thy hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17Jehovah is righteous in all his ways, His response to all who call upon him
And gracious in all his works.
18Jehovah is near all who call upon him,
To all who call upon him in truth.
19He fulfilleth the desire of those who fear him,
He also heareth their cry and saveth them.
20Jehovah preserveth all those who love him;
But all of the wicked he destroyeth.

21My mouth shall speak the praise of Jehovah, Epilogue
And let all flesh bless his holy name.[i]

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[d] 145⁷ Correcting the Heb. as the context requires.
[e] 145⁹ Lit., *compassions*.
[f] 145¹² So Gk. and Syr. Heb., *his*.
[g] 145¹⁵ So Gk. Heb. adds *to them*.
[h] 145¹⁶ So Gk. and the demands of the metre. Heb. omits the emphatic *thou*.
[i] 145²¹ Heb. adds, destroying the metre, *forever and ever*. In some MSS. this addition is also expanded to read, *and we will praise Jah; from now and evermore, praise Jah.*

§ 59. Jehovah's Justice and Goodness to His People, Ps. 33

Call to praise Jehovah because of his justice and goodness

Ps. 33 1 Rejoice in Jehovah and exult, O ye righteous;[j]
And shout for joy all ye upright in heart,
Praise is becoming to the upright.
2 Praise Jehovah with the lyre,
Sing unto him with a harp of ten strings,
3 Sing unto him a new song,[k]
Play skilfully with a loud shout.
4 For the word of Jehovah is right,
And all his work is with faithfulness.
5 He loveth righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the goodness of Jehovah.[l]

His work as creator of the universe

6 By Jehovah's command the heavens were made,
And by the breath of his mouth all their host.
7 He gathereth in a heap[m] the waters of the sea,
Layeth up in treasuries the great deep.
8 Let all the earth be in fear of Jehovah,
Let every dweller on earth stand in awe of him;
9 For he it was who spake and it came to pass,
He, it is, who commanded and it stood forth.

And ruler of nations

10 He[n] undoeth the counsels of nations,
He frustrateth the plans of peoples.
11 Jehovah's counsel standeth forever,
The plans of his mind from all generations.

His preservation of his people from strong foes

12 Happy the nation whose God is Jehovah,
The people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance.
13 Jehovah looketh from the heavens,
He seeth all the sons of mankind,
14 From the place where he sitteth he looketh forth
At all the inhabitants of the earth.
15 It is he who formed their mind altogether,

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§ 59 This is an orphan ps. Only in the Gk. does it have the superscription, *To David*, which characterises the earlier collection of hymns. The contents of this ps. confirm the implication of the lacking superscription that it is a late insertion into the early Davidic Psalter. Vs. ^{7} echoes Job. 38^{22}, vs. ^{9}, Gen. $1^{3, 15}$, Zech. 12^{1}. Vs. ^{16} finds its best historical illustration in I Mac. 3^{19}. Vss. $^{16, 17, 19\text{-}21}$ also point to a Maccabean background. Signal victories over well-equipped foes are still fresh in the poet's mind. The consciousness of constant peril has left an indelible stamp upon the ps. Its logic, however, is clear and its faith unwavering. It was well calculated to appeal both to the reason and the feeling of the valiant but sorely beset Jews who rallied about Judas Maccabeus.

[j] 33^{1} This ps. apparently began with the last vs. of the preceding ps. The first line of 33 in the Heb., *shout aloud ye righteous in Jehovah*, is apparently due to a mistake of the scribe, who repeated elements from the two preceding lines.

[k] 33^{3} Cf. Is. 42^{10}.

[l] 33^{5} Possibly the original read, simply, *his goodness*. But cf. ^{11}.

[m] 33^{7} Heb., *as a heap*. Certain versions read, *as a bottle*. Possibly the original read, *in a bottle*. The reference here and in the following vss. is clearly to the account of the creation given in Gen. 1.

[n] 33^{10} Heb. adds *Jehovah*.

He it is who perceiveth all their deeds.
16 The king doth not gain victory by his great army,
A mighty man is not delivered by his great strength,
17 The cavalry is a vain thing for safety,
And by the multitude of his army he is not delivered.[o]

18 Behold the eye of Jehovah is upon his worshippers, **His continued care for those who trust him**
Upon those who hope for his mercy,
19 To deliver their life from death,
And to preserve their life from famine.
20 Our life hangeth upon Jehovah,[p]
Our help and shield is he,
21 For in him our heart is glad,
For in his holy name we trust.
22 Let thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, be upon us,
According as we hope in thee.

§ 60. Thanksgiving for Jehovah's Justice and Love, Ps. 138

Ps. 138 1 I will give thanks, O Jehovah,[q] with my whole heart, **Jehovah's fidelity**
Before the gods will I make melody to thee.
2 I will worship toward thy holy temple,
And give thanks to thy name for thy lovingkindness,[r]
For thou hast magnified thy name above all.[s]
3 In the day that I called thou didst answer me,
Thou didst make thy strength great[t] in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth give thanks, **Recognised even by heathen kings**
For they have heard the words of thy mouth.
5 And they shall sing of the ways of Jehovah,
For great is the glory of Jehovah.

6 Though he[u] is high, yet he regardeth the lowly, **Assurance that he will continue to care for his people**
But the haughty he knoweth afar off.[v]
7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me,
Thou wilt stretch forth thy hand against[w] mine enemies,

---

[o] 33[17] Following the Gk. and Targ.
[p] 33[20] Lit., *our life waits for Jehovah*.
§ 60 The background of this ps. is either a great personal or national deliverance. Inasmuch as all the kings of the earth, [4], are impressed by it, the occasion would seem to be some great victory such as the overthrow of the Syrian armies by Judas and his followers. The consciousness of the need of Jehovah's continued protection against encircling foes, that is reflected so clearly in the last stanza, also points to the first half of the Maccabean era as the date of the ps.
[q] 138[1] The VSS. insert *Jehovah*, which is lacking in the Heb.
[r] 138[2] *Faithfulness* is probably a later insertion, for it destroys the regular metre and is not supported by the parallelism in [3].
[s] 138[2] The meaning of this line is obscure. Heb., lit., *For thou hast magnified thy word above all my name*. The above consonant reading is suggested by Duhm (*Psalmen*, 285). *Thy word* is lacking in Gk.
[t] 138[3] Again following the superior Gk.
[u] 138[4, 6] Heb. adds *Jehovah*.
[v] 138[6] Or, following a revised text, *he striketh down*.
[w] 138[7] Probably Heb., *wrath*, is due to a scribal error.

And thy right hand will save me.
8 Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me.
May thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, be forever;
Forsake not the works of thy hands.

II

THANKSGIVING FOR JEHOVAH'S GUIDANCE AND CARE IN ISRAEL'S PAST

Pss. 105, 114, 111, 117

§ 61. Jehovah's Unceasing Care of Israel, Ps. 105

Call to the descendants of Abraham to praise Jehovah

Ps. 105 1 Oh give thanks to Jehovah, proclaim[a] his name;
Make known his deeds among the peoples.
2 Sing to him, make for him melody;
Rehearse[b] all his marvellous works.
3 Glory in his holy name;
Let the heart of them rejoice who seek Jehovah.
4 Seek ye Jehovah and his strength,
Seek ye his face evermore.
5 Commemorate the wonders that he hath done,
His marvels, and the judgments of his mouth,
6 O ye seed of Abraham[c] his servant,
Ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

His covenant with their forefathers

7 He, Jehovah, is our God;
His judgments go forth[d] over all the earth.
8 He hath remembered his covenant forever,
The word he commanded to a thousand generations,
9 The covenant[e] which he made with Abraham,
And his oath which he swore to Isaac,
10 And confirmed to Jacob as a statute,[f]
To Israel as an everlasting covenant.[g]

§ 61 Briggs regards Pss. 105 and 106 as originally one ps., for in $106^{9\,ff}$. he finds the immediate sequel to 105^{1-37}. To combine them, however, he is compelled to delete $105^{38,\,47}$ and 106^{1-8}. Both pss. deal with the same theme, but in 106 the sins of the forefathers are heightened, indicating that the two pss. are written from distinct points of view and with different aims. Ps. 105, like 78, develops the historic theme of Is. $51^{1,\,2}$. In both Israel's history is reviewed with a didactic aim, but here the liturgical *motif* is in the ascendancy. Vss. $^{1-15}$ are quoted in I Chr. 16^{8-22} and attributed, together with a long quotation from 96, to David and connected with the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. Possibly the quotation was introduced into Chrs. by a later interpolator, but it is probable that the ps. was written during the first half of the Gk. period. The author

[a] 105^1 Or *call upon*, but cf. Ex. $34^{5,\,6}$, where the same idiom clearly means *proclaim*.
[b] 105^2 For this unusual verb, which means, lit., *hum*, cf. Judg. 5^{11}.
[c] 105^6 The parallel in I Chr. 16^{13} has *Israel*. This may be original.
[d] 105^7 Supplying the implied verb.
[e] 105^9 *Covenant* is not expressed but implied by the Heb. idiom. Cf. Gen. 22^{16}.
[f] 105^{10} Cf. Gen. 26^3 and 28^{13}.
[g] 105^{10} A scribe, recalling Gen. 12^7, has added the prose vs., *saying, to thee will I give the land of Canaan, the portion of your inheritance.*

For his protection during the patriarchal period

12 When they were but few men in number,
Very few, and sojourners in the land;[h]
13 When they went about from nation to nation,
From one kingdom to another people,
14 He suffered no man to oppress[i] them,
And he reproved kings for their sakes,
15 [Saying], 'Touch not mine anointed ones,
And do my prophets no harm.'

For his deliverance and exaltation of Joseph

16 And he called a famine on the land,
He broke the whole staff of bread.
17 He sent a man before them;
Joseph was sold as a slave.
18 They hurt his feet with fetters,
Into chains of iron he entered,[j]
19 Until the time that his word[k] came to pass,
The word of Jehovah tested him.
20 A king sent and loosed him,
Even the ruler of the peoples, and set him free.
21 He made him lord of his household,
And ruler of all his possessions,
22 To instruct[l] his princes at his pleasure,
And teach his elders wisdom.[m]

For prosperity in Egypt

23 Then Israel came to Egypt,
And Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
24 He increased his people greatly,
And made them stronger than their adversaries,
25 Their heart turned to hate his people,
To deal very subtly with his servants.

For the plagues sent upon the Egyptians

26 He sent them Moses, his servant,
Aaron, whom he had chosen.
27 He put[n] his wonders in Egypt,[o]
And marvels in the land of Ham.
28 He sent darkness, so that it was dark,
But they[p] rebelled against his words.
29 He turned their waters into blood,

---

knew the Hexateuch in its present form. He is also a faithful supporter of the law, cf. [45], but apparently knows nothing of the Maccabean struggle. The ps. was well calculated to inspire the patriotic and religious zeal of the Jewish race. It also has close literary affinities with the later Jewish *midrashim* or didactic stories.

h 105[12] Heb., *in it*, referring to the land.
i 105[14] Or, even more lit., *exploit them*.
j 105[18] The Heb. text must be restored at this point to make sense.
k 105[19] The *word of Jehovah* is here hypostasized, as in later Jewish literature.
l 105[22] So Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., through a scribal error, *bind*.
m 105[22] So VSS.
n 105[27] So VSS. Heb., *they put*.
o 105[27] Reconstructing the Heb.
p 105[28] So Gk., Syr. Heb. adds *not*.

And put to death their fish.
30Their land also swarmed with frogs,
They were in the chambers of the king.[q]
31He spoke, and a swarm of flies came,
And gnats[r] in all their territory.
32He gave them hail for rain,
Flaming fire in their land.
33He smote their vines and their fig-trees,
And broke the trees of their border.
34He spoke, and the locust came,
And the young locusts came without number,
35And ate up all the herbage in their land,
And ate up the fruit of their ground.

And the exodus

36And he smote all the first-born in their land,
The first-fruits of all their strength.
37And he brought them forth with silver and gold,
And there was not one that stumbled among his tribes.
38Egypt was glad when they departed,
For the fear of them had fallen upon them.

For his care in the wilderness

39He spread a cloud for a covering,
And fire to give light in the night.
40They[s] asked, and he brought them quails,
And satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
41He opened the rock, and waters gushed out,
They ran in the dry places like a river.
42For he kept in remembrance his holy word,
And his promise[t] to Abraham, his servant;
43And he brought forth his people with joy,
And his chosen with shouts of joy.

For possession of Canaan

44And he gave them the lands of the nations,
And they took possession of the labor of the peoples;
45That they might keep his statutes,
And observe his laws.[u]

§ 62. God's Deliverance of Israel from Egypt, Ps. 114

Proofs of his power at the Red Sea and Jordan

Ps. 114 1When Israel went forth out of Egypt,
The house of Jacob from a foreign people,
2Judah became his sanctuary,

---

[q] 105[30] Slightly revising the Heb.
[r] 105[31] Or *lice*.
[s] 105[40] So VSS.
[t] 105[42] Supplying the word implied by the context.
[u] 105[45] The concluding Hallelujah or *praise ye Jehovah* is evidently the superscription to 106.
§ 62 This ps. is based on the composite narrative of Ex. It is the record of the feelings which the reading of these ancient but stirring annals made upon a pious poet who probably lived during the Gk. period.

Israel the place of his dominion.
3 The sea saw it and fled,
The Jordan turned backward,
4 The mountains skipped like rams,
The little hills like lambs.

His rule over nature

5 What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleest?
O Jordan, that thou turnest backward?
6 Ye mountains, that ye skip like rams,
Ye little hills, like lambs?
7 Tremble, O earth, before the Lord,
At the presence of the God of Jacob,
8 Who turneth the rock into a pool,[v]
The flint into a fountain of waters.

§ 63. Jehovah's Goodness as Revealed by His Gracious Works, Ps. 111

Introduction

Ps. 111 1 I will thank Jehovah with all my heart,
In the circle of the upright and the congregation.[w]

Jehovah's great and just deeds

2 The works of Jehovah are great,
They are sought out of all who delight in them.
3 His work is honor and majesty,[x]
And his righteousness endureth forever.
4 A memorial[y] hath he made for his wonderful works;
Gracious and merciful is Jehovah.

Illustrated by his care of his people

5 Prey[z] hath he given to those who fear him;
He remembereth his covenant forever.
6 He hath declared to his people his mighty works,[a]
To give them the inheritance of the nations.

His deeds confirm his words

7 His works are faithfulness and justice,
Trustworthy are all his precepts;
8 They are established forever and ever,
They are done in faithfulness and uprightness.[b]

---

[v] 114[8] Lit., *pool of water*.

§ 63 This alphabetical poem is the first of the Hallel pss. The acrostic structure indicates that the opening words, *Praise ye Jah*, as in the case of the other Hallel pss., is a superscription rather than an integral part of the ps. The analysis is difficult because the necessity of beginning each alternating line with the succeeding letter of the Heb. alphabet made it impossible for the poet to express himself freely. Like many of the acrostic, liturgical pss., it consists of a series of pious ejaculations taken from earlier pss. or based on Israel's national experiences. Its position in the Psalter, its acrostic structure, its legal vocabulary, and its echo in [10] of one of the fundamental teachings of the sages indicate that it comes from the Gk. period, although [5, 6, 9] may point to the Maccabean era.

[w] 111[1] This reference indicates that the psalmist belonged to the group of the pious, who were devoted to the worship of the temple and who emerge in later history as the Hasideans, the forerunners of the Pharisees.

[x] 111[3] *I. e.*, are glorious and splendid.

[y] 111[4] *I. e.*, definite occasions when special thanks should be given to him.

[z] 111[5] Possibly a reference to the spoils and conquests won in neighboring heathen lands.

[a] 111[6] Lit., *might of his works*.

[b] 111[8] So VSS.

His faithfulness to those who fear him

9 **He hath sent redemption to his people,**
He hath commanded his covenant forever;
Holy and reverent is his name.
10 **The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom,**
A good understanding have all who do so;
His praise endureth forever.

§ 64. Jehovah's Love and Fidelity, Ps. 117

Ps. 117 1 **Oh praise Jehovah, all ye nations,**
Laud him, all ye peoples.
2 **For his lovingkindness is great toward us,**
And his[a] faithfulness endureth forever.

III

THANKSGIVING FOR RECENT NATIONAL DELIVERANCES

Pss. 18, 66^{1-12}, 68, 76, 124, 126, 118

§ 65. Jehovah's Protection and Deliverance of His Servant, Ps. 18

Jehovah a refuge in the hour of mortal need

Ps. 18 2 **Jehovah[a] is my rock and my fortress,**
My deliverer,[b] my stronghold in which I seek refuge;
My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower,
My saviour, who delivereth me from violence.[c]

---

§ 64 This little hymn of praise expresses feelings characteristic of the pss. of the Gk. period.
[a] 117^2 Heb., *of Jehovah*.

§ 65 This ps. opens with an elaborate superscription: *For the musicial director. To David, the servant of Jehovah, who spoke to Jehovah the words of this song in the day that Jehovah delivered him from the hand of his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And he said, I love thee, Jehovah, my strength.* The ps. itself is written entirely in the first person singular; but a later hand, possibly the same that wrote the superscription, has added a postscript in the third person:

Who giveth deliverance to his king,
And doeth kindness to his anointed,
To David and his seed forever.

Possibly, under the influence of the interpretation suggested by this superscription and postscript the ps. was placed in the mouth of David and included in the appendix to II Sam. In its present position in II Sam 22 it separates the extracts from the older records of David's reign found in 21 and 24. The variations between the two versions of the ps. are many and significant. On the whole, the version in II Sam. 22 is the better preserved. Whether the ps. was placed in II Sam. as the result of the testimony of the superscription at the beginning of Ps. 18 or not is uncertain; but, like the other traditions of Davidic authorship appended to pss., it is evidently much later than the ps. itself, which contains no strong evidence in favor of and much against its Davidic authorship. While there is a certain ideal or messianic element running through the ps., there are many indications that it is not individual but national. The keynote of the ps. is struck in ^{27}: *For thou dost save an afflicted people.* The elaborate theophany described in $^{8-15}$ is natural if in behalf of a nation but not of an individual. The foes described are not individuals, but nations. Cf. especially $^{29.\ 37-48}$. Throughout the ps. the allusions are to general not to specific events. It is a song of praise and adoration for Jehovah's signal deliverances of his people. It contains many echoes of II Is. and Dt. 32. The late priestly conception of righteousness is presented in $^{20-24}$.

[a] 18^2 The Heb. of this ps. has the introductory line, *I love thee, Jehovah, my strength;* but it is lacking in the parallel version of II Sam. 22, and has no corresponding line in the context.
[b] 18^2 So II Sam. 22^2. The Heb. adds *my God*, but it is in Ps. 18^2 probably the result of a scribal error in writing the original Heb. of *to me*.
[c] 18^2 II Sam. 22^3 adds *my refuge, from violence thou savest me*, but the transition to the direct address is not supported by the context although the line is probably original.

[3]Worthy to be praised is Jehovah, I proclaim,
Inasmuch as I am saved from mine enemies.
[4]The breakers[d] of death encompassed me,
And the floods of impiety[e] made me afraid.
[5]The cords of Sheol came around me,
The snares of death confronted me.
[6]In my distress I called upon Jehovah,
And cried for help to my God;
From his temple he heard my voice,
My cry for help came[f] to his ears.

His advent to deliver

[7]The earth shook and quaked,
And the foundations of the heavens[g] trembled.
They tottered because he was wroth.
[8]Smoke went up out of his nostrils,[h]
And fire from his mouth devoured,
Coals flamed forth from him.
[9]Then he bowed the heavens and came down,
Thick darkness was under his feet;
[10]And he rode upon a cherub and flew,
Yea, he swooped down upon the wings of the wind.
[11]Darkness he placed[i] round about him,[j]
His covering was the mass[k] of the waters,
Thick clouds of the skies [12]without brightness,[l]
Before him his thick clouds passed,
Coals of fire burned.[m]
[13]Then Jehovah thundered from[n] the heavens,
The Highest gave forth his voice;[o]
[14]He sent out his arrows and scattered them,[p]
He shot forth[q] his lightning and discomfited them.[r]

The reflective, didactic note of the wisdom teachers appears in [25-27]. The presence of certain Aramaic words also point to a comparatively late period. The deliverance in [4-6] may have been suggested by the work of Nehemiah in protecting the Judean community from its foes. The victorious, warlike note in [34-40] points to the early Maccabean period. The ps. may possibly come from the latter part of the Persian period, but on the whole it fits better in the days following the great victories of Judas, in 165 B.C. It was probably added to the first collection of Davidic pss., even after the early canon of the Psalter was complete, because it had already found a place in II Sam. and was by common consent attributed to David. While it contains many strong figures, it lacks the originality and spontaneity of the earlier and less elaborate pss.

[d] 18[4] So II Sam. 22[5] and the demands of the context.

[e] 18[4] Lit., *Belial*. The figures in this vs. are exceedingly strong.

[f] 18[6] So II Sam. 22[7] and the demands of the metre. The Heb. of the ps. adds *before him*.

[g] 18[7] So II Sam. 22[8]. Ps. 18[7], *mountains*.

[h] 18[8] Lit., *in his nostrils*, as an index of his anger.

[i] 18[11] So Gk., Targ., and II Sam. 22[12].

[j] 18[11] So II Sam. 22[12] and the demands of the metre. Ps. 18 adds *his secret place*.

[k] 18[11] So II Sam. 22[12]. Heb. of Ps. 18, *darkness*.

[l] 18[12] The division of the vs. is misleading.

[m] 18[12] So II Sam. 22[13]. Heb. of Ps. 18, *hail and coals of fire*. The reference seems to be to the flashes of lightning which penetrated the thick clouds.

[n] 18[13] So II Sam. 22[14]. Heb. of Ps. 18, *in the heavens*.

[o] 18[13] So Gk. and II Sam. 22[14]. A scribe has repeated by mistake [12c] in Ps. 18.

[p] 18[14] *I. e.*, the thunder clouds.

[q] 18[14] So Gk. and Luc. Cf. II Sam. 22[15]. Heb. is evidently corrupt, as the variations in the parallel passage in Ps. 18 and II Sam. 22 indicate.

[r] 18[14] Or *made them rumble*.

15 And the channels of the waters[s] were seen,
And the foundations of the world were laid bare,
At his rebuke, at the blast of his[t] nostrils.[u]

His deliverance of his servant

16 He sent forth[v] from on high, he took me,
He drew me out of many waters,
17 He delivered me from my enemy who was strong,
And from my haters, for they were too strong for me,
18 Who came upon me in the day of my calamity.
And Jehovah became my stay,
19 He led me forth into a broad place,[w]
And rescued me because he took pleasure in me.

The reason for the deliverance

20 Jehovah regarded me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.
21 For I have kept the ways of Jehovah,
And have not wilfully departed from my God.
22 For all his judgments were before me,
And I did not put away his statutes from me.
23 I was also upright before him,
And I guarded myself against mine iniquity.
24 Therefore Jehovah hath rewarded me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

Jehovah's impartial justice

25 With the kind thou wilt show thyself kind,
With the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright,
26 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure,
And with the perverse thou wilt show thyself perverse.
27 For thou dost save an afflicted people,
But haughty looks thou dost bring low.

The strength which he imparts to his servant

28 For thou, Jehovah,[x] art my light;[y]
Thou, O God, wilt lighten my darkness,
29 For by thy help I run upon a troop,[a]
And by God's help I leap over a wall.
30 As for God, his way is perfect,
And the word of God is tried;
He is a shield to all those who seek refuge in him.

---

[s] 18[15] Cf. II Sam. 22[16]. The reference may be to the waters under or to the streams on the earth.

[t] 18[15] So Gk. of II Sam. 22[16]. Ps. 18 makes it a direct address, departing from the construction of the rest of the vs. This line may be a scribal addition.

[u] 18[15] Lit., *at the breath of his nostrils*.

[v] 18[16] The verbs indicate repeated acts of deliverance.

[w] 18[19] So II Sam. 22[20] and the demands of the metre. *I. e.*, where I would be free from persecution.

[x] 18[28] So II Sam. 22[29] and the demands of the metre.

[y] 18[28] Cf. Ps. 18, *thou lightest*. So Gk. Heb., *Jehovah enlighteneth.*

[a] 18[29] So Gk. and Luc. Cf. II Sam. 22[30], *wall*.

31 For who is a God save Jehovah?
And who is a rock besides our God?
32 A God who girdeth me with strength,
And maketh my way perfect;
33 Who setteth my feet like hinds' feet,[b]
And maketh me stand upon heights;[c]
34 Who teacheth my hands to war,
So that mine arms can stretch a bow of brass.[d]
35 Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation,
Thy[e] right hand[f] and thy discipline instruct me.[g]

And the ability to crush all hostile foes

36 Thou hast made room under me for my steps,
So that my feet never slip.
37 I pursue mine enemies and overtake them,
I do not turn until they are destroyed,
38 I wound them so that they are not able to rise,
So that they fall beneath my feet.[h]
39 And thou girdest me with strength for war,
Thou subduest under me those who rise up against me,
40 And thou makest my foes to turn the back to me,
So that I cut off those who hate me.
41 They cry for help but there is no deliverer,
To Jehovah,[i] but he doth not answer them;
42 I beat them small as the dust of the earth,[j]
And I grind them[k] as the fine mud of the street.

To subdue foreign peoples

43 Thou deliverest me from the strivings of the[l] people,
Thou settest me at the head of the nations;
A people I knew not serve me,
44 Strangers come cringing before me;[m]
As soon as they hear of me[n] they obey me.
45 Strangers sink down exhausted before me,[o]
And they come trembling from their strongholds.

Concluding doxology

46 Jehovah liveth; blessed be my Rock;
Exalted be the God of my salvation;

---

[b] 18³³ *I. e.*, so that they are firm even in the most dangerous places.
[c] 18³³ So Gk., Syr., and Lat. Cf. II Sam. 22³⁴. Heb. of Ps. 18, *my heights*.
[d] 18³⁴ The meaning of this verb is doubtful. Possibly the original read, *and maketh mine arms bronze!*
[e] 18³⁵ II Sam. 22³⁶, *my*.
[f] 18³⁵ So II Sam. 22³⁶, which also omits *thy right hand*.
[g] 18³⁵ So Gk. and Theod. This line has been variously interpreted in the VSS. and the reading is uncertain.
[h] 18³⁸ Following II Sam. 22 and the Syr. and Targ.
[i] 18⁴¹ So II Sam. 22⁴².
[j] 18⁴² So Gk. and Luc. of II Sam. 22⁴³. Heb. of Ps. 18, *as dust before the wind*.
[k] 18⁴² Following the Gk. and Lat. of II Sam. 22⁴³ and the Syr. and Targ. of Ps. 18. The Heb. reading is due to a common scribal error.
[l] 18⁴³ So Gk. of II Sam. 22⁴⁴. Heb. of II Sam., *my people*.
[m] 18⁴⁴ Correcting the variant and corrupt text of Ps. 18 by the aid of II Sam. 22 and the context. In Ps. 18 the first and second lines have been transposed.
[n] 18⁴⁴ Lit., *at the hearing of the ear*.
[o] 18⁴⁵ Restoring this doubtful vs. by the aid of II Sam.

47 The God, who giveth me vengeance,
And subdueth[p] peoples under me,
48 Who delivereth me from all mine enemies,
Thou wilt lift me up above mine opponents,
Thou wilt deliver me from the man who is violent.[q]
49 Therefore I will give thee thanks among the nations,
I will sing praises to thy name, O Jehovah.

§ 66. Jehovah's Might and Justice, Ps. 66[1-12]

Exordium: Jehovah's victorious might

Ps. 66 1 Shout to Jehovah, all the earth,
2 Sing forth the glory of his name,
Make his praise glorious.
3 Say,[r] 'How terrible are thy works!
Through thy great might thine enemies come cringing to thee.
4 All the earth boweth down before thee,
And they sing praises,[s] they sing praises to thy name.'

His rulership over the nations

5 Come and see the works of Jehovah,
He is terrible in his dealing with men,
6 He turned the sea into dry land,
They went through the stream on foot.
Verily, in him we rejoice,
7 He who ruleth by his might forever,
His eyes keep watch over the nations;
Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

His testing and deliverance of his people

8 O bless our God, ye peoples,
And make the sound of his praise to be heard.
9 He it is who setteth us in life,
And suffereth not our feet to be moved.
10 For thou, O Jehovah, hast proved us,
Thou hast tried us as silver is tried.
11 Thou broughtest us into the net,
Thou didst lay a heavy burden upon our loins,
12 Thou didst cause men to ride over our head,
We went through fire and through water,
13 But thou broughtest us out to a broad place.[t]

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[p] 18[47] So II Sam. 22[48] and the demands of the context.
[q] 18[48] So II Sam. 22[49].
§ 66 Most recent interpreters recognize that Ps. 66 contains two originally independent hymns; the first, [1-12], is uttered in behalf of the community, while the second, [13-20], is individual. The first ps. was either written in the joyous days following the work of Nehemiah or, as is more probable, it is a Maccabean ps. written after the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes and after the Jews, led by Judas, had won their marvellous victories. Cf. especially [3, 4, 11, 12].
[r] 66[3] Heb. adds *to God*, but this is unnecessary and is probably a scribal explanatory note.
[s] 66[4] Possibly the same scribe has also added in this line an unnecessary *to thee*. It is probably a case of dittography from the last word of the preceding line.
[t] 66[12] So VSS. The Heb. is usually translated, *into a wealthy place*.

§ 67. Jehovah's Just and Omnipotent Sway over Men and Nature, Ps. 68

Jehovah, the invincible warrior

Ps. 68 1 When Jehovah[u] ariseth his enemies are scattered,
And those who hate him flee before him.
2 As smoke is driven away when the wind[v] driveth it,
As wax doth melt before the fire,
So the wicked perish before Jehovah.
3 But the righteous are glad, they exult,
Before Jehovah they rejoice with gladness.

Champion of the helpless and oppressed

4 Sing to Jehovah, make melody to his name,
Extol him who rideth on the clouds;[w]
Bless his name[x] and exult before him,
5 Father of the fatherless, and defender of widows.
Jehovah is in his holy habitation;
6 Jehovah bringeth home the solitary,[y]
He leadeth forth those bound with chains,[z]
But the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

Controller of the forces of nature in behalf of his people

7 Jehovah, when thou wentest forth before thy people,
When thou didst march through the wilderness, 8 the earth trembled,[a]
The heavens dripped at the presence of Jehovah,
Yon Sinai[b] before Jehovah, Israel's God.
9 Thou didst send down, O Jehovah, a plentiful rain,
Thou didst strengthen thine inheritance when it was weary;

---

§ 67 Evidently the background of this ps. is a great victory. It was so signal and complete that it recalled the other great victory won by the Hebrews on the plain of Esdraelon under the leadership of Deborah and Barak. The poet constantly weaves into this ps. figures and lines derived from the ancient poem describing that event, Judg. 5. Now he has in mind the defeat not of the king Sisera but of the royal leaders of several armies who have been put to flight, leaving their rich, scattered spoil behind them, [12-14]. The warlike, exultant spirit is clearly that of the Maccabean era. Cf. [20-23]. The many citations from older Heb. poems, and especially II Is., also point to a late date. The vivid picture of the processions of singers and musicians and the assembled people in [24-28] is a counterpart of the description of the reconsecration of the temple by Judas and his followers in 165 B.C., when they had won their marvellous victories over the Syrian armies. I Mac. 4[54b-56] states that the temple was dedicated again with songs and harps and lutes and with cymbals. And all the people prostrated themselves and worshipped and gave praise to Heaven, who had given them good success. And they celebrated the dedication of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness and sacrificed a sacrifice of deliverance and praise. This ps. has been assigned to almost every period from Joshua to John Hyrcanus, but in the momentous year of 165 B.C. it finds its only altogether satisfactory setting. It richly supplements our knowledge of that crisis, for it reveals the feelings of the victorious Jews. Like the contemporary visions of Dan. 7–12, its language is highly figurative and at times almost florid, but it is full of poetic fire. Cf. [13-15]. The rebellious in [6-18] are probably the apostate Jews.

[u] 68¹ Or *let Jehovah arise*. The original rendering *Jehovah* has been restored throughout this Elohistic ps.

[v] 68² Supplying the implied antecedent *wind*. The present Heb. reads, *thou drivest*. But in this passage Jehovah is spoken of in the third person rather than in the second and the parallelism demands the above rendering.

[w] 68⁴ Slightly reconstructing the Heb. text as the context and the parallel in [33] imply. Heb., *in the barren places*.

[x] 68⁴ Again reconstructing the Heb. as the context demands. The Heb. text, which reads, *in Jah, his name*, makes no sense and is evidently corrupt. This conclusion is confirmed by the variant Gk. reading. Another possible reconstruction is, *In Jehovah rejoice and exult before him*.

[y] 68⁶ *I. e.*, restoreth the lonely, scattered exiles.

[z] 68⁶ Gk. and Syr., *in graves*. The Heb. text is doubtful.

[a] 68⁸·⁹ The figures in these vss. are derived from the song of Deborah, Judg. 5.

[b] 68⁸ One MS. omits this phrase and it may be secondary.

10 Thy living creatures dwelt therein,
In thy goodness,[c] thou didst make provision for the afflicted.

His overthrow of Israel's foes

11 The Lord sendeth forth a message;
A mighty host are the women who proclaim the good tidings.
12 The kings[d] of the armies flee, they flee;
And she[e] that tarrieth at home divideth spoil.[f]
13 The wings of the dove were covered with silver,[g]
And her pinions with yellow gold;
14 When the Almighty scattered kings,
Then it was as if it snowed on Zalmon.[h]

The invincible might of Jerusalem, Jehovah's abode

15 O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan,
O many-peaked mountain of Bashan![i]
16 Why do ye watch enviously, O ye many-peaked mountains,
The mount whereon Jehovah loveth to dwell?[j]
Verily, Jehovah will dwell there forever!

The rewards of victory

17 The chariots of God are myriads,[k]
The Lord cometh from Sinai in his holiness,
18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast carried away captives,
Thou hast received gifts among men;
Only the rebellious dwell not[l] with Jehovah.

Jehovah's deliverance of his people from their foes

19 Bless the Lord day by day;
He beareth our burden, he[m] delivereth us.
20 God is for us a God of salvation,
And to Jehovah[n] belong the issues of death.
21 Jehovah crusheth the head of his enemies,
The hairy scalp of him who goeth about in his guilt.
22 The Lord hath said, 'Even from Bashan I will save thee,[o]

---

[c] 68[10] Heb. adds *Jehovah*.
[d] 68[12] Gk., *king*, but this is probably due to the influence of the song of Deborah.
[e] 68[12] *I. e.*, wives of the victorious warriors. The poet also had in mind Judg. 5[29, 30].
[f] 68[12] A scribe has introduced at the close of this line a quotation from Judg. 5[16], *Will ye lie down among the sheepfolds?* It is clearly secondary. Possibly the rest of [13] is also a later addition, for [14] continues the theme of [12].
[g] 68[13] From the context and the parallel of the song of Deborah, it is evident that in this obscure passage the reference must be to the flight of the defeated Canaanites as they left their silver and gold behind them.
[h] 68[14] The situation of Zalmon is unknown. It may have been one of the hills where a Maccabean victory was won, which was strewn with the bones of the slaughtered warriors.
[i] 68[15] Probably Bashan simply stands for an invincible mountain and higher by comparison than the temple mount of Jerusalem. Cf. the common figure of *oaks of Bashan* used as a symbol of strength.
[j] 68[16] Dividing the Heb. letters as the context requires. The present Heb. text is practically meaningless.
[k] 68[17] The text here is doubtful. *Thousands upon thousands* is a familiar type of scribal expansion.
[l] 68[18] Following the Syr. Heb. has lost the negative and is clearly corrupt. Possibly this line is secondary.
[m] 68[19] Heb., *the God who*.
[n] 68[20] Omitting *Lord* with the Gk.
[o] 68[22] The meaning of this line is obscure. In the light of the parallelism the thought apparently is that even from distant Bashan Jehovah will save his people. Cf. I Mac. 5 for Judas's expedition a few months later to save the Jews living in this region.

I will save thee from the very depths of the sea;
23 That thou mayest bathe[p] thy foot in blood,
That thy dogs' tongues may have their share[q] of the foes.'

The triumphal procession

24 They have seen[r] thy processions, O Jehovah,
The processions of my God, my King, in holiness.
25 The singers go before, the musicians after,[s]
In the midst maidens shaking their timbrels [singing]:
26 'Bless Jehovah in the congregations,
Even the Lord, ye who have sprung from Israel.[t]
27 There is little Benjamin, the conqueror,[u]
The princes of Judah, a throng of them,
The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.'

May Jehovah make the victory of his people permanent

28 O Jehovah, command thy strength,
Strengthen, O Jehovah, thy work[v] for us.
29 O Jerusalem,[w] to thee kings shall bring gifts.
30 Rebuke the wild beasts of the reeds,[x]
The assembly of bulls, the masters of the nations;[y]
Tread down those who delight in falsehood,[z]
Scatter[a] the people who delight in war.

May all peoples praise Jehovah

31 May mighty ones come from Egypt,
May Cush lift up his[b] hands to Jehovah.
32 Let the kingdoms of the earth sing to Jehovah,
Let them sing praises[c] to the Lord;
33 Extol him who rideth upon the primeval heaven of heavens,
Who doth send out his voice, a mighty voice.
34 Ascribe ye strength to Jehovah;
His majesty is over Israel and his strength in the clouds.
35 From thy sanctuary,[d] O Jehovah, thou showest thyself terrible.
The God of Israel giveth strength and power to his people.
Bless Jehovah.

---

[p] 68[23] Following the versions in correcting the error in Heb.
[q] 68[23] Following a slightly corrected Heb. text.
[r] 68[24] Gk., *they beheld*.
[s] 68[25] This is one of the clearest descriptions which we have in the O.T. of a festival procession. It indicates that both sexes participated and that music was employed as well as song.
[t] 68[26] The meaning of the Heb. is here very doubtful.
[u] 68[27] These lines are clearly echoes of Judg. 5[14-18].
[v] 68[28] Following the Gk., Syr., Targ., and many other MSS. Heb., *thy God commandeth thy strength*.
[w] 68[29] The Heb. adds *From thy temple upon Jerusalem, to thee the kings shall bring gifts*. But this is either a conflation of two independent lines or else a scribal addition anticipating [31, 32].
[x] 68[30] The reference is probably to the Egyptians, as in Is. 30[1-7].
[y] 68[30] Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads, *with the calves of the people*.
[z] 68[30] Again correcting the exceedingly corrupt Heb.
[a] 68[30] Following the Gk., Lat., and Syr.
[b] 68[31] Gk., Sym., *her hands*.
[c] 68[32] Heb. reads, simply, *selah*; but this is evidently a scribal error for the similar Heb. word which appears in [4] and is demanded by the present context. Gk., *play to God*.
[d] 68[35] So Syr., Targ., and many Heb. MSS. Heb., *thy sanctuaries*.

§ 68. The Victorious Might of Israel's God, Ps. 76

Jehovah's victory over Judah's foes

Ps. 76 1 In Judah is God known,
His name is great in Israel.
2 In Salem[e] also is his covert,
And his habitation in Zion.
3 There he broke the fiery shafts of the bow,
Shield and sword and battle.

His might as a warrior

4 Thou wast fearful[f] from the mountains of prey,[g]
5 The stouthearted were made a spoil,
They slept their sleep,[h]
And none of the men of might found their hands.
6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
Chariot and horse fell into a deep sleep.

His righteous judgments

7 Verily thou, O Jehovah,[i] art fearful,
And who can stand before the power of thine anger?
8 From heaven thou didst let sentence be heard,
The earth also feared, and was still,
9 When thou didst arise to judge, O God,
To save all the afflicted of the land.

He alone is worthy of men's homage

10 Surely the wrath of man[j] praiseth thee,
The residue of wrath keepeth festival to thee.
11 Pay vows to Jehovah,[k] your God,
To the terrible One let all round about him bring gifts.
12 He taketh away[l] the spirit of princes,
He is terrible to the kings of the earth.

---

§ 68 Here we feel the warlike, exultant Maccabean spirit. The ps. was evidently written after a signal victory. It may well have been the defeat of the boastful Syrians under the three generals on the plain near Emmaus, recorded in I Mac. 4[1-27]. *The afflicted* in [9] describes the persecuted Jews in the early stages of the Maccabean struggle. The text of this ps. has suffered greatly; but scribal errors have not wholly obscured its bold vigor and hopefulness.

[e] 76[2] A late designation of Jerusalem. Cf. Gen. 14[18].

[f] 76[4] This line is evidently corrupt, as the variant readings and the lack of consistency with the context indicate. The Heb. must be corrected with the aid of Targ., which reads, *fearful* for *glorious*. Cf. [7, 12], where the same title is used. *Excellent*, added in the Heb., is probably due to a scribe who was trying to make the meaning clear.

[g] 76[4] Gk., *everlasting mountains*. This reading may be original but the Heb. is consistent with the picture of Jehovah as a lion defying and shattering the weapons of Israel's foes and leaping upon the sleeping hosts, even as Judas, descending from the mountains, attacked the unsuspecting Syrians in the early morning, I Mac. 4[1-27].

[h] 76[5] *I. e.*, had no time to make armed resistance before they were overpowered by the fierce warriors of Judas.

[i] 76[7] Restoring the corrupt Heb. text.

[j] 76[10] The meaning of this vs. is not clear. *Wrath of men* may mean wrath against men, *i. e.*, the feeling of indignation which the Jews felt toward their foes. The traditional Heb. text of the second line makes little sense, *shalt thou gird upon thee*. A slight change gives the above.

[k] 76[11] *Jehovah* may be a scribal addition.

[l] 76[12] So Gk. and Lat. Heb., *cut off*, *i. e.*, courage.

§ 69. Jehovah's Mighty Deliverance, Ps. 124

Ps. 124 [1]If it had not been Jehovah who was ours, let Israel now say,
[2]If it had not been Jehovah who was ours, when men rose up against us;
[3]Then they had swallowed us alive, when their wrath was kindled against us,
[4]Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our souls.[m]

Jehovah's deliverance in hours of peril

[6]Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.
[7]Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers;
The snare was broken, and we indeed have escaped alive.
[8]Our help is in the name of Jehovah, maker of heaven and earth.

Thanksgiving to Jehovah for escape

§ 70. Thanksgiving for a Return of Prosperity, Ps. 126

Ps. 126 [1]When Jehovah restoreth prosperity to Zion,
We are like those who have been dreaming.
[2]Then is our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing;
Then they say among the nations:
'Jehovah hath done great things for them.'
[3]He[n] hath done great things for us; we are glad.

Joy over return of prosperity

[4]Hasten our prosperity, O Jehovah,
As the streams in the South Country.[o]
[5]May they who sow in tears reap in joy.
[6]Let him who goeth forth weeping,
Bearing the seed for sowing,
Come again with joy, bringing his sheaves.

Prayer for prosperity

§ 71. Jehovah's Unceasing Goodness, Ps. 118

Ps. 118 [1]Oh give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good;
For his kindness endureth forever.

Call to all classes to praise Jehovah

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§ 69 Here we have another vivid, practically contemporary picture of the strenuous Maccabean crisis, when for a time the Jews seemed, indeed, to be given up as prey to the teeth of their heathen foes.

[m] 124[4] A scribe has repeated the preceding line.

§ 70 In this ps. we hear the laughter and songs of the Jews, when the victories of Judas turned the tide of prosperity toward Zion and when all the heathen world recognised that their God had verily done great things for his people. The second stanza indicates that, as during the early years of the Maccabean era, the crisis had not entirely passed.

[n] 126[3] Heb. repeats *Jehovah*.

[o] 126[4] *I. e.*, where the land is parched and in need of water.

§ 71 This is one of the most majestic of all the liturgical pss. Its unity has been questioned and many able commentators have been inclined to interpret the recurring refrains as evidence of alternating strophe and antistrophe in the mouth of a soloist and a chorus or two distinct choruses. That this is true of the processional that begins with [19] cannot be doubted. The literary structure of the first part, however, appears to be simpler. Vss. [1-4] are a call to praise Jehovah. First the entire nation, then the priests, and last of all the assembled worshippers are exhorted to join in the hymn of praise and triumph which follows, [5-18]. The spokesman in [1-4] may be the high priest or more probably the director of the temple singers. Then the assembled people outside the temple gates join with the priests within in a song of national thanksgiving in which the nation, as in many other pss., speaks collectively. In the processional which begins

[2]Let the house of[p] Israel say:
'His kindness endureth forever.'
[3]Let the house of Aaron now say:
'His kindness endureth forever.'
[4]Let those who fear Jehovah say:
'His kindness endureth forever.'

Jehovah's ability and readiness to deliver

[5]Out of my distress I called upon Jehovah;
Jehovah answered me[q] in a large place.
[6]Jehovah is for me; I fear not.
What is there that men can do to me?[r]
[7]Jehovah is for me among those who help me,[s]
I, therefore, face those who hate me.
[8]It is better to take refuge in Jehovah
Than it is to put faith in man.
[9]It is better to take refuge in Jehovah
Than it is to put faith in princes.

His help against attacking foes

[10]All nations encompassed me about;
In the name of Jehovah I will circumcise[t] them.
[11]They encompassed me about; they encompassed me;
In the name of Jehovah I will circumcise them.
[12]They encompassed me as bees do wax;[u]
In the name of Jehovah I will circumcise them.[v]
[13]They who thrust at me thrust that I might fall;[w]
But Jehovah helped me.

---

in [19] the worshippers outside the temple gates address the Levites or the priests, who reply in each succeeding couplet. The assembled worshippers speak collectively, as in the first part of the ps., while the priests or Levites address them in the plural. In conclusion, [29], all join in the refrain.

This martial ps. is the later counterpart of the triumphal odes of which the so-called song of Deborah in Judg. 5 is a classic example. It possibly embodies passages drawn from older war-songs. Vss. [10-16] clearly reflects the warlike spirit of the Maccabean age. It abounds in vivid references to the details of the Maccabean struggle, *e. g., All nations encompass me about.* In their disastrous negotiations with such perfidious kings as Antiochus Epiphanes they had learned the lesson that *it is better to take refuge in Jehovah than to put faith in princes*, [9]. Evidently the ps. was written after a signal victory. Cf. [5]. This was in all probability Judas's victory over Nicanor, and this ps. may well have been written to be sung in celebrating Nicanor's day. According to I Mac. 7[48, 49], the people rejoiced greatly and kept that day as a day of great gladness. They also enacted an ordinance for the yearly celebration of this day, the thirteenth day of Adar. This ps. voices the spontaneous outburst that resulted from the relaxation of the tension of the early Maccabean struggle. It contains quotations from many earlier pss. The large liturgical element indicates that it is intended to be used in a public service. It is exceedingly probable, therefore, that it is written to be used in celebrating Nicanor's day. It is interesting to note that the first person singular is constantly used to express the collective thought of the community.

[p] 118[2] So Gk. Heb. omits *house of*, as the metre requires.

[q] 118[5] A condensed statement implying the verb *set me*. The figure is the antithesis of that suggested by the first member of the couplet, *i. e.*, a narrow place. The line is an echo of 18,[19] *he brought me forth into a large place.*

[r] 118[6] The vs. is quoted from 56[11].

[s] 118[7] An echo of 54[4, 7]. The rest means, lit., *look*, *i. e.*, gaze unabashed and triumphant.

[t] 118[10] This is the literal meaning of the Heb. and corresponds to the usage of the Maccabean leaders. The Idumeans, for example, were judaised and circumcised by John Hyrcanus at the point of the sword. Otherwise the text must be revised to read, *cause them to fall.*

[u] 118[12] So Gk. Heb., *they are quenched as fire of thorns.* This makes no sense and is evidently due to a scribal mistake and addition.

[v] 118[12] This stirring vs. of the AV was chanted by the Protestant army at the battle of Coutras as they advanced to the fray.

[w] 118[13] Heb., *thou didst thrust me sore that I might fall*, makes no sense. The Gk. suggests that the above reading represents the original text.

[14]Jehovah is my strength and song,[x]
And he hath become my deliverance.

[15]Joyful cries of victory[y] are in the tents of the righteous: Joy of victory
'The right hand of Jehovah doeth valiantly.
[16]The right hand of Jehovah is exalted,
The right hand of Jehovah doeth valiantly.
[17]I shall not die, but I shall live,
And declare the deeds of Jehovah.
[18]Jehovah hath chastened me sorely,
But he hath not given me over to death.'

PROCESSIONAL

Worshippers:
[19]Open to me the gates of righteousness;[z]
I will enter into them to give thanks to Jehovah.

Levites:
[20]This is the gate of Jehovah;
The righteous may enter into it.

Worshippers:
[21]I will give thanks to thee; for thou hast answered me,
And art become my deliverance.

Levites:
[22]The stone which the builders rejected[a]
Hath become the chief cornerstone.

Worshippers:
[23]This is Jehovah's doing;
It is indeed marvellous in our eyes.

Levites:
[24]This is the day which Jehovah hath made;
Let us exult and be glad in it.

Worshippers:
[25]O now, Jehovah, grant victory;
O now, Jehovah, send prosperity.

Levites:
[26]Blessed[b] be he who entereth in the name of Jehovah;
We have blessed you from the house of Jehovah.[c]

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x 118[14] A reminiscence of Ex. 15[2]. Possibly the couplet is secondary.
y 118[15] Lit., *the voice of rejoicing and victory.*
z 118[19] *I. e.*, the gates that open for the righteous. Cf. [20].
a 118[22] The figure refers to Zion, which, as in Is. 28[16], is the chief corner-stone. It appropriately describes the Jewish race crushed, battered, and rejected by all peoples until the Maccabean struggles restored it to a position of honor and importance.
b 118[26] *I. e.*, grant his favor as in the priestly blessing of Nu. 6[25].
c 118[26] Vs. [27] is evidently corrupt. Many reconstructions have been suggested. Possibly the verb is to be read, as in I Kgs. 20[14], *begin the dance with branches even to the altar, even to the horns of the altar. Wreathe the festal march with branches of myrtle.* From the analogy of the

Worshippers:

[28]Thou art my God, and I will give thanks to thee;
Thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

Levites:

[29]Oh give thanks to Jehovah; for he is good,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

IV

THANKSGIVING FOR JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE

Pss. 48, 84, 87

§ 72. The Beauty and Glory of Jehovah's City, Ps. 48

Beautiful situation

Ps. 48 [1]Great and highly to be praised is the city of our God,[a]
His holy mount is [2]beautiful in situation, the joy of the whole earth;
Mount Zion, on the northern slopes,[b] it is a royal city.[c]

Jehovah's protecting care

[3]Jehovah[d] is mighty within her citadels, he is known as a strong refuge;
[4]For behold, the kings assemble, they pass by together.
[5]When they looked they were amazed and troubled, they fled in alarm;
[6]Trembling seized them there, writhing as a woman in travail,
[7]As when[e] an east wind breaks the ships of Tarshish.
[8]As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of Jehovah of hosts:[f]
Jehovah hath established it forever and ever.[g]

His acts of judgment

[9]We meditate, O Jehovah, on thy goodness in the midst of thy temple;
[10]As is thy name,[h] O Jehovah, so is thy praise[i] to the ends of the earth;
Thy right hand is full of righteousness, [11]Mount Zion rejoiceth;
The daughters of Judah exult because of thine acts of judgment.

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preceding stanzas we expect here a direct address to Jehovah, as in [21-26]. This is found in [28]. Whatever be the exact meaning of [27b], it is evidently a prose liturgical direction that has probably crept into the text from the margin. The first part of [27], *thou art God and he giveth us light*, is probably secondary, for it is loosely connected with its context.

§ 72 This ps. was clearly written after the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls under the leadership of Nehemiah. It may well voice the pride and exultation of the Jewish community after this work was completed.

[a] 48[1] Heb., *great is Jehovah . . . in the city of our God*. But *Jehovah* is evidently an addition later than the work of the editor of these pss., who systematically changed the name of Jehovah to Elohim (God). The present Heb. reading is also inconsistent with the context, with the metrical structure of the line, and with the general feeling of the ps. Probably the late scribe who added this word also added the preposition *in* before the *city of Jehovah* in order to make the line intelligible. Removing these later additions, the meaning of the ps. is clear.

[b] 48[2] *I. e.*, the temple hill which slopes to the north.

[c] 48[2] The usual reading is, *the city of the great king*. But the following line requires a verb to complete the thought and metre. Reading the last word of the preceding line thus solves the two or three distinct problems presented by the context.

[d] 48[3] Restoring the original *Jehovah* which was changed by a later scribe to *Elohim*.

[e] 48[7] Heb. *in*. But the above reading is supported by certain MSS. and the context.

[f] 48[8] The text is evidently here corrupt. Heb. adds the repetitious phrase *in the city of our God*.

[g] 48[8] The Heb. has the word *selah*. Possibly this represents a similar Heb. word meaning *ever*, so completing the metrical structure of the line with the expression *forever and ever*.

[h] 48[10] Here, as elsewhere in the O.T., *name* stands for *character*.

[i] 48[10] Slightly correcting the Heb. in accordance with certain MSS.

12 Walk about Zion and encircle her, count her towers, **Evidence of his care**
13 Mark ye well her bulwarks,[j] distinguish[k] her citadels,
That ye may tell it to the generation that is to follow,
14 That such is Jehovah our God forever and ever.[l]

§ 73. A Jewish Pilgrim's Appreciation of the Temple Worship, Ps. 84

Ps. 84 1 How beloved are thy tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts! **The joy of abiding in Jehovah's sanctuary**
2 My soul longeth, yea, fainteth, for the courts of Jehovah;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
3 Verily the sparrow[m] doth find her house,
And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
Even thine altars, O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God.
4 Happy they who dwell in thy house, who continually[n] praise thee!

The happiness of those who make pilgrimages to the temple
5 Happy is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the highways[o] [to Zion].
6 Passing through the valley of weeping[p] he[q] maketh it a place of springs;
Yea [it is as if] the early rain covered it with blessings.[r]
7 He[s] goeth from strength to strength;[t] he appeareth before God.

In Zion, 8 O Jehovah, God of hosts, hear my prayer; **The pilgrim's prayer of thanksgiving**
Give ear, O God of Jacob; 9 thou art our shield;[u]

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[j] 48[13] Again slightly revising the Heb. in accordance with the demands of the context and according to the MSS.

[k] 48[13] Lit., *pass between*. The exact meaning of the verb, however, is not certain.

[l] 48[14] The Heb. adds *It is he who leadeth us to death*, but the Gk. omits the verb, and the words translated *unto death* are probably a part of the musical direction which originally stood at the beginning of the following ps.

§ 73 The exile is in the background and the restored city and temple in the foreground of this ps. The point of view is evidently that of a pilgrim who has made a long and arduous journey to worship at the temple. Worship for him is not a duty but a transcendent privilege. His spirit is not crushed by the burdens imposed by the later Jewish law nor by the ceremonialism of the ritual. He loves the temple because it is the place where he may worship the living God for which his heart and flesh cry out. Pilgrimages from the lands of the dispersion do not appear to have been common until the latter part of the Persian and the early part of the Gk. period. This general date well satisfies the implications within the ps. *Selah* marks the end of the first stanza, [4]. The five-beat measure expresses the deep emotion and exultation of the poet. Many scholars hold that the latter part of the ps. is supplemented by extracts from an originally independent ps., but the evidence is not convincing.

[m] 84[3] Any small bird.

[n] 84[4] Lit., *still*. Gk., *forever and ever*.

[o] 84[5] Gk., *goings up, i. e.*, pilgrimages.

[p] 84[6] Probably the psalmist has in mind Hos. 2[15], where the valley of Achor (trouble) becomes a door of hope through which the Hebrews in their early days passed from their painful experiences in the Wilderness to the possession of Canaan. Cf. *deep, dark valley* in Ps. 23[4]. The reference is to any cheerless, barren valley such as those which surround southern Palestine on almost every side.

[q] 84[6] So one Heb. MS. and Gk. Heb., *they*.

[r] 84[6] The comparison here is apparently with a field covered with springing vegetation as the result of an early spring rain.

[s] 84[7] Heb., *they*, but the preceding and following context indicates that the original read as above.

[t] 84[7] Possibly this means from one stronghold to another, or from wall to wall, referring to the pilgrim custom of encamping each night under the shadow of some city wall. It is possible and on the whole more probable, that it refers to the strength derived from Jehovah, to which reference is made in [5], although a different Heb. word is used.

[u] 84[9] Many commentators regard this vs. as a later gloss. *Shield*, however, here, as in [11], probably refers to Jehovah. A departure from the Massoretic division of the text gives a better meaning and satisfies the demands of the metre. If [9] is original, as seems probable, *thine anointed* would either refer to the Jewish people or to the psalmist himself.

Behold, O God, and look upon the face of thine anointed.
10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand;
I would rather lie on the threshold[v] in the house of my God
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.[w]
11 For a sun and a shield is Jehovah, my God;
Grace and glory Jehovah ever giveth,
No good thing doth he withhold from those who walk uprightly.
12 O Jehovah of hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee.

§ 74. The Privilege of Citizenship in Zion, Ps. 87

Jehovah's love for Jerusalem

Ps. 87 1 Jehovah founded[x] it on the holy mountain;
2 Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.[y]
3 Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.

The loyal exiles

4 I will make mention of Rahab[a] and Babylon because of those who know me;
Behold of Philistia and Tyre,[a] 'This one was born there.'
5 And of Zion I will say, 'Mother![b] This and that man was born in her;

Jehovah's regard for citizenship in Zion

And the Most High, Jehovah himself will establish her.'
6 He counteth in the register of the peoples, 'This one was born there.'
7 They sing as well as dance, all whose fountains[c] are in thee.

V

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR PERSONAL DELIVERANCES

Ps. 30, Jon. 2^{2-9}, Pss. 66^{13-20}, 116

§ 75. Gratitude for Deliverance from Death, Ps. 30

From mortal peril

Ps. 30 1 I exalt thee, O Jehovah, for thou hast drawn me forth,[a]
And thou hast not permitted my foes to rejoice over me, O Jehovah.
2 My God, I cried to thee for help and thou hast healed me;

---

v 84^{10} This rendering of the Heb. is supported by the Gk. and by the Lat. The current Eng. translation is *be a doorkeeper*.

w 84^{10} *I. e.*, in the land of the heathen even though they offer large opportunity.

§ 74 Like Ps. 84, this ps. probably comes from the Gk. period. Its outlook includes the lands of the dispersion. The text is obscure and the exact meaning a little doubtful. The unifying thought is that wherever the scattered members of the Hebrew race may be found they glory in their common citizenship in Zion. Even in the mind of Jehovah, citizenship in Zion is regarded as a great distinction.

x 87^{1} The abrupt opening, *his foundation*, suggests that the original read as above. This reading is also supported by the metre and parallelism of the vs.

y 87^{2} *I. e.*, all the other places where the Jews dwell.

a 87^{4} The symbolic name of Egypt, used in Is. 30^{7} and Ezek. 29^{3} to describe that land as a monster that swallows up the nations.

a 87^{4} A scribe has added *with Ethiopia*. The reference in this vs. is probably to the Jews dwelling in these lands and possibly also to the proselytes found there.

b 87^{5} So Gk. Heb. omits *mother*.

c 87^{7} Gk. and Lat., *dwellings*. The Heb., *fountains*, probably means all who have sprung from Zion.

§ 75 This ps. bears the superscription, *A Psalm: Sung at the Dedication of the House of David*. This title suggests that it was later used in connection with the feast of dedication of the temple in 165 B.C. The presence of such phrases as *go down to the pit*, 3, 9, and the familiarity of the

a 30^{1} Lit., *draw out water*.

3 O Jehovah, out of Sheol thou hast brought up my soul,
From among those who go down to the pit thou hast quickened me.[b]

5 For his anger is momentary, but in his favor is full life.[c]
At eventide weeping cometh to lodge, but in the morning a glad shout;[d]
6 And in my prosperity I said, 'I shall never be moved.'[e]
7 O Jehovah, by thy favor thou didst make me stand as a strong mountain;[f]
When thou didst hide thy face, I was filled with dismay.

Significance of Jehovah's favor

8 To thee, O Jehovah, I call and make supplication:
9 What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit?
Can the dust give thee praise, make known thy faithfulness?
10 Oh hear and be gracious, become to me a helper.

Petition for its continuance

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing,
Thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,
12 That to thee my heart[g] may sing praise and not be silent.
O Jehovah my God, I will give thanks to thee forever.

Unceasing praise

§ 76. Gratitude for Deliverance from Great Peril, Jon. 2^{2-9}

Jon. 2 2 I cried out of my distress to Jehovah, and he answered me;
Out of the midst of Sheol I cried aloud, and thou heardest my voice.
3 For thou hadst cast me into the heart of the seas, and the flood rolled about me;

An exile's distress

---

psalmist with such late passages as Is. $54^{7,8}$ and Jer. 31^{12}, and the references to the great afflictions in ^{2,3} indicate that the ps. is post-exilic. The psalmist, however, still holds the primitive conception of the future life as a joyless, impersonal existence, ^{9}. He is also unfamiliar with the teachings of the book of Job. The language of the ps., especially in $^{2,3,6-10}$, is strongly individualistic. It is possible that it may have been later used by the community as a public hymn, but there is little doubt that its foundation is the poet's own personal experience. Its thought and its place in the Psalter indicate that it probably was written about the middle of the Persian period.

[b] 30^{3} It is exceedingly probable that the following lines:

Sing to Jehovah, O ye his saints;
And give thanks in commemoration of his holiness,

are secondary, for they anticipate the thought of ^{12} and are in the three-beat rather than in the prevailing four-beat measure. Their language and thought are also alien to the context.

[c] 30^{5} Lit., *for a moment in his anger, lives in his favor*.

[d] 30^{5} This beautiful figure of sorrow coming into the heart to lodge overnight, as the shades of twilight gather, and of the relief and joy which come at sunrise is marvellously true to human experience.

[e] 30^{6} Possibly this line is secondary.

[f] 30^{7} This line is evidently corrupt. The above rendering is based upon a slight emendation of the text and is strongly supported by the context. The Heb. adds *unto my Lord*. Certain MSS. have *Jehovah* and the Gk., *my God*. It is probably a scribal addition, for it destroys the metrical and logical symmetry of the vs. Gk. translates the vs. in the past tense rather than as imperatives.

[g] 30^{12} Here, as frequently in the pss., the Heb. word for *liver*, which was thought to be the seat of the emotions (Assyr., *kabittu*), has evidently been mistaken for the more common and very similar Heb. word meaning *glory*.

§ 76 This ps., inserted in the story of Jonah, but with no close connection with the context, was probably placed there by some later editor of the prophetic book because certain of its figures recalled the experiences of the Hebrew prophet. It is not entirely clear whether it was originally intended to express the experiences of the Jewish race or of the psalmist. The points of contact with Ps. 30 are many and close. Probably the author of Jon. 2 was familiar with the older ps. His figures, however, are more hyperbolic and varied. In any case they are not to be interpreted literalistically. As in Ps. 80, the poet probably has primarily in mind his own experiences as an exile in a foreign land. His zeal for the temple service is strong, cf. $^{4,7-9}$, and indicates that he probably lived during the Greek period. For critical notes, cf. § 202^{k-q}, Vol. III.

All thy breakers and thy waves passed over me.
4Then I said, 'I am driven out from before thine eyes;
How shall I ever again look towards thy holy temple?'
5The waters surrounded me even to the quenching of my life, the abyss engulfed me,
The sea weeds were wrapped about my head; 6I went down to the roots of the mountains;
The earth with its bars was behind me forever.

His restoration and vows to Jehovah

Yet thou hast brought up my life from destruction, O Jehovah my God.
7When my soul fainted within me, I remembered Jehovah,
And my prayer came to thee, into thy holy temple.
8They who regard vain gods forsake their own mercy,
9But I will sacrifice to thee with loud thanksgiving,
I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation is Jehovah's.

§ 77. Thanksgiving for Personal Deliverance, Ps. 66[13-20]

The fulfilment of a vow

Ps. 66 13I will enter thy house with burnt offerings,
I will pay to thee my vows,
14Even those which my lips have uttered,[h]
And my mouth spoke in my distress.
15I will offer to thee burnt offerings of fatlings,
Together with the incense of rams;
I will offer bullocks with goats.

The cause of the poet's thanksgiving

16O come, hear, and let me relate,[i]
All of you who fear Jehovah,
What he hath done for me:
17To him I cried with my mouth,[j]
And him I extolled with my tongue.
18If iniquity I had beheld in my heart,[k]
The Lord would never have heeded;
19But verily, Jehovah hath heard,
He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

Doxology

20Bless Jehovah,
Who hath not turned away my prayer,
Nor his lovingkindness from me.

---

§ 77 This appendix to the national hymn found in the first part of the ps. was evidently intended to be used by a grateful offerer as he came up to the temple to present to Jehovah the offering which he had promised in connection with a vow. The second stanza describes in general terms the reason for his gratitude: because Jehovah has answered the prayer uttered with his vow. The psalmist's own experience is, without reasonable doubt, the occasion of this poem, although it doubtless found a place in the Psalter because it was adapted to use by others who in the same way came to present their sacrifice which they had vowed. It may even have been used by the community in connection with some great deliverance. There are no clear indications regarding its date. The strong repetitious and liturgical note suggests the Gk. or Maccabean age.

h 66[14] Lit., *which parted my lips*.

i 66[16] The current Eng. translations do not follow the Heb. order in this vs.

j 66[17] So Syr., supported in part by Lat.

k 66[18] This vs. destroys the close connection between [17] and [19] and is possibly secondary.

§ 78. Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Great Affliction, Ps. 116

Exordium

Ps. 116 1 I love Jehovah because he hath heard
The voice of my supplications;[l]
2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me,
Therefore will I call upon the name of Jehovah.[m]

The signal deliverance

3 The cords of death encompassed me,
And the pains of Sheol took hold on me,
I found trouble and sorrow;
4 Then I called upon the name of Jehovah:

'Jehovah, I beseech thee, deliver me,
5 O Jehovah, gracious and righteous!
Even our God, who is merciful,'
[Therefore do I call on the name of Jehovah].

Jehovah's gracious care and provision

6 Jehovah is the keeper of the simple;
I was weak but he became my help.
7 Return to thy rest,[n] O my soul,
[And call on the name of Jehovah].

Jehovah hath dealt bountifully with me,
8 For he[o] hath delivered my life from death,[p]
My feet also from falling,
[Therefore do I call on the name of Jehovah].

Protestation of loyalty to him

9 I will walk before Jehovah
In the land of the living.
10 I believe, therefore will I speak,
[And call on the name of Jehovah].

I indeed was greatly afflicted,
11 I said in my haste,
'Every man is a liar,'
[Therefore on the name of Jehovah will I call].

---

§ 78 This composite ps. was probably written to be used by those who brought votive offerings to the temple. The refrain which appears originally to have been introduced at the end of every three lines has been restored in 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 19. As Cobb has pointed out, 7, 10a are not intelligible without the refrain which is itself inferred. The refrain may, as Duhm suggests, have been uttered by the offerer, while the rest of the ps. was chanted by the temple singers. The liturgical form, the Aramaic words, and the strong emphasis on the ceremonial type of religion point to the Gk. period. The interest and value consist in the prominent place which the ps. undoubtedly occupied in the worship of the common people.

[l] 116^1 So Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., *my voice and my supplications*.

[m] 116^2 The Heb. is evidently corrupt and the versions have various readings, which point, however, to the refrain which has been restored above.

[n] 116^7 Heb., *my resting place*.

[o] 116^8 So Gk., Lat., and certain Syr. MSS. Heb., *thou hast delivered*.

[p] 116^8 So Syr. A scribe has added in the Heb. the duplicate phrase *mine eyes from tears*, but this is clearly secondary. Vss. 8, 9 are taken from 56^{13}.

Promise of faithful service

12 What shall I render to Jehovah,
For all his benefits toward me?
13 I will take the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of Jehovah.[q]

15 Precious in the eyes of Jehovah
Is the death of those who love him.
16 O Jehovah, truly I am thy servant,
[Therefore I call on thy name, O Jehovah].

Thanksgiving and votive offerings

I am thy servant, the son of thy handmaid;
Thou hast loosed my bonds.
17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon thy name, O Jehovah.

18 I will pay my vows to Jehovah
In the presence of all his people;
19 In the courts of the house of Jehovah
[Will I call on the name of Jehovah].[r]

VI

LITURGICAL HYMNS

Pss. 81^{1-5}, 100, 115, 134, 135, 136, 146, $147^{1-11, 12-20}$, 148, 149, 150

§ 79. Summons to Praise Jehovah at the Passover, Ps. 81^{1-5}

The immemorial service of song

Ps. 81 1 Sing aloud to God our strength,
Shout to the God of Jacob.
2 Raise a song, and sound the timbrel,
The pleasant lyre with the harp.
3 Blow the horn at the new moon,
On the full moon, on our feast day;
4 For it is a statute for Israel,
An ordinance[a] of the God of Jacob.
5 He appointed it in Joseph for a testimony,
When he went forth from[b] the land of Egypt.

---

[q] 116^{13} Heb. repeats here ^{18}, but it is properly omitted in the Syr.
[r] 116^{19} The last line in the Heb. reads, *in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem*, which is probably a corruption of the refrain which has been restored above.
§ 79 The prominent liturgical motive in this ps. points to a date at least as late as the Gk. period. The reference to the exodus in ^{5} leaves little doubt that the feast in connection with which this little hymn was sung was that of the Passover. The remainder of the ps. deals with an entirely different theme and was, without reasonable doubt, added by a later editor. Cf. § 174.
[a] 81^{4} Lit., *judgment*, but a divine decision was intended which is best translated in Eng. by the word *law* or *ordinance*.
[b] 81^{5} So Gk. and Lat. and the demands of the context. Heb., *over*.

§ 80. Summons to Unite in Praise of Jehovah in His Temple, Ps. 100

Ps. 100 [1]Shout to Jehovah, all the land,[c]
[2]Serve Jehovah with gladness,
Come before him with exaltation.
[3]Know that Jehovah is God,
He hath made us and we are his,[d]
His people and the flock of his pasture.

Call to all Israel to praise Jehovah

[4]Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
Come into[e] his courts with praise,
Give thanks to him and bless his name,
[5]For he[f] is good, his lovingkindness everlasting,
And his faithfulness to all generations.

And to worship him in his temple

§ 81. Jehovah's Superiority to all Heathen Gods, Ps. 115

Ps. 115 [1]Not to us, O Jehovah, not to us,
But to thy name give glory,
Because of thy lovingkindness and truth.
[2]Why should the nations say:[g]
'Where now is their God?'
[3]For our God is in the heavens;
All that he pleaseth he doeth.

Jehovah invisible but omnipotent

[4]Their idols[h] are silver and gold,
Wrought by the hands of men;
[5]A mouth have they, but they speak not,
Eyes have they, but they see not,
[6]Ears have they, but they hear not,
A nose have they, but they smell not,
[7]They have hands, but they feel not,
Feet they have, but they walk not,
Neither is breath in their mouths,[i]

Impotence of the heathen gods and their worshippers

---

§ 80 This ps. was probably written to be sung on one of the national feast days. In distinction from the pss. which immediately precede, it is national rather than universal in its outlook. Like a majority of the liturgical pss., it probably comes from the Gk. period.

[c] 100^1 Or, *earth*.

[d] 100^3 So marginal reading of Heb., Targ., Old Lat., and Aquila. Heb. and Gk., *not we ourselves;* but the above reading is supported by the following line.

[e] 100^4 Supplying the verb required by the parallelism.

[f] 100^4 Heb. adds *Jehovah*, but neither the metre nor sense require it.

§ 81 The VSS. join this ps. to the preceding, but this union was probably not original but for later liturgical use. One theme unites this ps., although the alternating lines in $^{9-11}$ were probably sung antiphonally, ^{12} by the people, and ^{13} by the high priest. The ps. as a whole, because of its vigor and strong religious feeling, was well adapted to use in public service. The contrast here is between Israel's one God, unseen but revealed in the nation's life, and the gods of the heathen represented by the lifeless images. The historical student feels here the beginning of the mortal struggle which commenced in the latter part of the Gk. period and culminated in the Maccabean uprising. The hopeful spirit and the prominence of the house of Aaron point to the earlier part of the second century B.C.

[g] 115^2 A repetition of 79^1.

[h] 115^4 Gk., Lat., and Syr., *the idols of the heathen*.

[i] 115^7 Ps. 115^{4-7} is repeated in 135^{15-16}. The missing line, which is restored here, is preserved in 135^{17}.

Nor do they speak through their throat.
8 Like them shall they be who made them,
Everyone who trusteth in them.

Jehovah, Israel's trust and protection

9 The house of Israel[j] trusteth[k] in Jehovah,
He is their help and their shield.
10 The house of Aaron trusteth in Jehovah,
He is their help and their shield.
11 They who fear[l] Jehovah trust Jehovah,
He is their help and their shield.

He will surely bless them

12 Jehovah remembereth us; he will bless us;
He will bless the house of Israel,
He will bless the house of Aaron,
13 He will bless those who fear Jehovah,
Small together with the great.

The priestly blessing

14 May Jehovah add to you,
Even to you and to your children.
15 Blessed be ye of Jehovah,
Who made heaven and earth.

The living praise him

16 The heavens are assigned[m] to Jehovah;
But the earth hath he given to mankind.
17 The dead praise not Jehovah,
Nor any who go down into silence;
18 But we bless Jehovah,
Now even to eternity.

§ 82. Call to Worship Jehovah by Night as Well as by Day, Ps. 134

Ps. 134 1 Behold, bless ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah,
Ye who by night stand in the house of Jehovah.
2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary and bless Jehovah.
3 Out of Zion bless Jehovah[n] who hath made heaven and earth.

---

[j] 115^{9} So Gk. and Syr. and the parallel in 135^{19}. Heb. omits *house of*.

[k] 115^{9} So Gk., which here and in the following vss. has the perfect instead of the imperative. The change was probably made under the influence of the parallel in 135^{19-21}, where the imperative occurs instead of the third person.

[l] 115^{11} Probably proselytes. Cf. the devout Greeks of the N.T.

[m] 115^{16} Gk., Lat., Syr., Targ., *heavens of heavens*. But a slight revision of the Heb. suggested by Briggs, *Pss.* II, 397, gives the above harmonious reading.

§ 82 This little pilgrim ps. was addressed to the Levites who guarded the temple and probably carried on its musical services far into the night. Like most of the pilgrim pss., it doubtless comes from the Gk. period.

[n] 134^{3} Following Briggs in restoring the line as the context demands. The traditional text reads, *Jehovah bless thee out of Zion.*

§ 83. Jehovah's Love Revealed in Nature and in Israel's History, Ps. 135

Call to praise

Ps. 135 1 Praise ye the name of Jehovah;
Praise him, ye servants of Jehovah,
2 Ye who stand in the house of Jehovah,
In the courts of the house of our God.
3 Praise ye Jehovah, for he[o] is good,
Make melody to his name, for it is lovely.

The omnipotent might of Israel's God revealed in nature

4 For Jehovah hath chosen Jacob for himself,
And Israel for his peculiar possession.
5 I know that Jehovah is great,
And that our Lord is above all gods.
6 Whatever Jehovah pleaseth, he doeth,[p]
In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps;
7 He sendeth up the vapors from the ends of the earth,
By lightnings he maketh the rain,
He bringeth forth the wind out of his treasuries.[q]

In Israel's early history

8 He smote the first-born of Egypt,
Both of man and of beast,
9 He sent signs and wonders into the midst of[r] Egypt,
Upon Pharaoh and upon all of his servants.
10 He smote many nations,
And slew mighty kings,
11 Sihon king of the Amorites,
And Og, king of Bashan,
And all the kingdoms of Canaan,
12 And gave their land for a heritage,
As a heritage to Israel his people.

His fame and mercy

13 Thy name, O Jehovah, is forever;
Thy fame, O Jehovah, for all generations.
14 For Jehovah will vindicate[s] his people,
And relent concerning his servants.

Impotence of heathen gods

15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold,
Wrought by the hands of men.
16 A mouth have they, but they speak not,
17 Ears have they, but they hear not,

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§ 83 This is a composite ps. Vss. 15-21 are freely quoted from 115 4-8, vs. 6 from 115 3, and many other lines are taken from Ex. and Dt. The theme is one that is often developed by the psalmists. This hymn cannot be earlier than the Gk. period. The references in 10, 11, as well as the position of the ps. in the Psalter, suggest that it comes from the Maccabean era.

[o] 135 3 Heb., *Jehovah*.
[p] 135 6 Cf. 115 3 for the briefer original.
[q] 135 7 Cf. the original passage in Jer. 10 13.
[r] 135 9 Slightly correcting the Heb.
[s] 135 14 Lit., *judge*, i. e., render a just decision concerning.

Neither have they breath in their mouth.
[18]May they who make them be like them,
Yea, everyone who trusteth in them.

Let all his people unite in praising Jehovah

[19]O house of Israel, bless Jehovah!
O house of Aaron, bless Jehovah!
[20]O house of Levi, bless Jehovah!
Ye who fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah!
[21]Blessed out of Zion be Jehovah,
Who dwelleth at Jerusalem.

§ 84. God's Goodness Revealed in the Work of Creation and in Israel's History, Ps. 136

Praise for his supremacy

Ps. 136 [1]O give thanks to the Lord Jehovah, for he is good,
For his lovingkindness[t] endureth forever.[u]
[2]O give thanks to the God of gods,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[3]O give thanks to the Lord of lords,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[4]To him who alone doeth great[v] wonders,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

For his creative acts

[5]To him who by understanding made the heavens,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[6]To him who spread out the earth above the waters,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[7]To him who made great lights,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[8]The sun to rule by day,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[9]The moon and stars to rule by night,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

For his deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt

[10]To him who smote Egypt in their first-born,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[11]And brought out Israel from among them,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
[12]With a strong hand and with an outstretched arm,[w]

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§ 84 This highly liturgical ps. is a composite of ideas and phrases derived from earlier O.T. writing. Thus the opening vs. is found also in 106[1], 107[1], and 118[1]. Vss. [2, 3] are an echo of Dt. 10[17]; vs. [4] of Ps. 72[18] and 86[10]; vs. [5] of Jer. 10[12]; vs. [6] of Is. 42[5]; and [7-9] of Gen. 1[16-18]. Dt., II Is., Gen. 1, and other comparatively late pss. are the chief sources. This dependence indicates that this ps. was probably not written before the Gk. period. The allusion to Jehovah's deliverance of his people from their adversaries, in [23], and the exultant note that pervades the ps. point to the Maccabean era, when the people rejoiced over their victories. Sopherim 18[12] states that in later times it was sung on the seventh day of the feast of Unleavened Bread. Its didactic purpose is evident, and it may originally have been chanted in the synagogue, the leader reciting the first line in each couplet and the people or temple singers joining in the recurring refrain.

[t] 136[1] Lit., *the feeling of love and mercy that prompts kindly acts.*

[u] 136[2] Lit., *is eternal.*

[v] 136[4] *Great* destroys the metre in the Heb. and may be secondary.

[w] 136[12] Cf. Dt. 5[15], 6[12], etc., for this idiom.

For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
13 To him who divided the Red Sea in sunder,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it,[x]
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
15 And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

16 To him who led his people through the wilderness, — For leading his people to the possession of Canaan
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
17 To him who smote great kings,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
18 And slew famous kings,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
19 Sihon king of the Amorites,[y]
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
20 And Og, king of Bashan,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
21 And gave their land for a heritage,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
22 Even a heritage to Israel his servant,[a]
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

23 Who remembered us in our low estate, — For their deliverance from foes
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
24 And hath delivered us from our adversaries,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh, — For his care of all mankind
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
26 O give thanks to the God of Heaven,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.

§ 85. Jehovah the Unfailing Helper, Ps. 146

Ps. 146 1 Praise Jehovah, O my soul! — Exordium
2 While I live will I praise Jehovah,
I will sing praises to my God while I have being.

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[x] 136^{14} Cf. Ex. 14^{27}.

[y] 136^{19-22} These vss. are regarded by some commentators as a later insertion, for they depart from the regular theme of the ps. But cf. $^{8, 9, 12}$ for a similar departure. In a highly composite ps. of this character it is difficult to distinguish with assurance earlier and later strata.

[a] 136^{22} Cf. 135^{11}, *his people*.

§ 85 This Hallel ps. is preceded and followed by the liturgical formula *Hallelujah*. That at the end is not found, however, in the Gk. Vs. ^{4} is quoted in I Mac. 2^{63b}, indicating that it is at least earlier than the date of that book. It comes either from the latter part of the Gk. or the earlier part of the Maccabean period. Its confident, exultant note, perhaps, points to the reign of Simon, who worthily imitated the divine King in championing the needy and in freeing Jewish captives. Cf. I Mac. 13.

Unreliability of man

3 Put not your trust in princes,
Nor in son of man, who is helpless,[a]
4 Because he returneth to the earth,[b]
And all his thoughts do perish.

God's steadfastness

5 Happy is he whose help is Jacob's God,
Whose hope is in Jehovah his God,
6 The maker of heaven and earth,
Of the sea, and all that in them is,
Who keepeth faithfulness forever,
7 Who doeth justice to the oppressed,
Who giveth food to the hungry.

His kindness to the needy

Jehovah, who looseth the prisoners,
8 Jehovah who openeth blind eyes,
Jehovah who raiseth up those bowed down,
Jehovah who loveth the righteous,
9 Jehovah who preserveth the sojourners,
He upholdeth the fatherless and widow,
But the way of the wicked he maketh crooked.[c]

Epilogue

10 Jehovah will reign forever,
Thy God, O Zion, to all generations.

§ 86. Jehovah's Gracious and Omnipotent Power, Ps. 147^{1-11}

His restoration of his scattered people

Ps. 147 1 Praise Jehovah, for it is good,[d]
Make melody to our God, for it is pleasant.[e]
2 Jehovah doth build up Jerusalem,
He gathereth the outcasts of Israel,
3 He healeth the broken-hearted,
And bindeth up their painful wounds.

His rule in heaven and among men

4 He counteth the number of the stars,
He giveth names to all of them,
5 Great is our Lord, and of mighty power,
His understanding is infinite.

---

[a] 146^3 Lit., *to whom there is no help.*

[b] 146^4 So I Mac. 2^{63b} and the requirements of the metre. Heb., *his breath goeth forth, he returneth.*

[c] 146^9 The line is based on Ps. 1^6, Job 8^3, 34^{12}, and Ecc. 7^{13}. It may be secondary, for it is loosely connected with its context.

§ 86 Ps. 147 contains two originally independent poems. They are still separate in the Gk. but have been united in the Heb., probably because they deal with the same theme and in very much the same way. Briggs (cf. Duhm's order: $^{1-3, 6, 7, 4, 5, 8-11}$) also finds two poems in $^{1-6}$ and $^{7-11}$; but $^{7-9}$ and $^{4-6}$ are too closely parallel in thought to be separated and $^{1-11}$ makes a complete and logical literary unit. Like the other hymns of thanksgiving in this collection, it was probably first sung to celebrate the Maccabean victories.

[d] 147^1 Slightly revising the Heb. as the context and parallelism demand.

[e] 147^1 A scribe has added from 33^1, *praise is comely.* Gk., *praise is comely for our God.*

[6]Jehovah is the restorer of the afflicted,
He casteth down the wicked to earth.

Provisions for need of animal world

[7]Sing to Jehovah with thanksgiving,
Make melody upon the harp to our God,
[8]Who covereth the heavens with clouds,
Who prepareth rain for the earth,
Who maketh the mountains put forth verdure,[f]
[9]He giveth to the beast his food,
To the young ravens when they cry.

His delight in his worshippers

[10]He delighteth not in the strength of the horse,
He taketh no pleasure in a man's legs;
[11]Jehovah taketh pleasure in his worshippers,[g]
In those who wait for his lovingkindness.

§ 87. Jehovah's Gracious Rule in Nature and in Israel's History, Ps. 147[12-20]

His provisions for his people

Ps. 147 [12]Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem,
Praise thy God, O Zion;
[13]For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates,
He hath blessed thy children in thy midst.
[14]He maketh thy borders peace;
He satisfieth thee with the finest of the wheat.

His rule in nature

[15]He sendeth his command to the earth,[h]
His word runneth very swiftly.
[16]He giveth snow like wool,
He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.
[17]He casteth down his ice like morsels,
The waters stand before his cold.[i]
[18]He sendeth out his word and melteth them,
He causeth his wind to change and the waters flow.[j]

His especial revelation to Israel

[19]He declareth his word to Jacob,
His statutes and his ordinances to Israel.
[20]He hath not dealt so with any other nation,
And his judgments they know not.

---

[f] 147[8] Or, revising, *he maketh verdure grow on the mountains.*

[g] 147[10] Lit., *those who fear him.*

§ 87 This little liturgical ps. is richly suggestive of the spirit of the Jews in the days of Simon, when at last they were at comparative peace with the ring of attacking foes which in the earlier days of the Maccabean struggle had enmeshed them, [14]. It voices the satisfaction and thanksgiving with which they viewed their unwonted prosperity.

[h] 147[15] Cf. Gen. 1 for the same idea of Jehovah's rule by command.

[i] 147[17] Restoring the Heb. as the next line demands, for it implies that the waters had been frozen by the cold.

[j] 148[18] A change of the wind from the north to the east or south (the direction of the hot desert) brings a sudden rise of temperature in Palestine.

§ 88. Call to All Created Things to Praise Jehovah, Ps. 148

All that is in the heavens

Ps. 148 1 Praise ye Jehovah from the heavens,
Praise him on the heights.
2 Praise him, all his angels,
Praise him, all his host.
3 Praise him, sun and moon,
Praise him, all ye stars of light.
4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens,
And ye waters that are above the heavens.
5 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
For he commanded, and they were created,
6 And he hath established them forever and ever,
He hath given a statute not to be transgressed.[k]

All on earth

7 Praise Jehovah from the earth,
Ye monsters of the sea and all deeps,
8 Fire and hail, snow and vapor,
Storm wind, fulfilling his word,
9 Ye mountains and all ye hills,
Fruit trees and all ye cedars,
10 Wild animals and all ye cattle,
Creeping things and flying birds,
11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
Princes and all judges of the earth,
12 Both young men and maidens,
Old men and children;
13 Let them praise the name of Jehovah,
For his name is exalted on high,
His majesty is over earth and heaven,
14 And he hath lifted up the horn of his people.[l]
He is the praise of all his faithful ones,
Of the Israelites, a people which is near to him.

§ 89. Thanksgiving for Recent Victories, Ps. 149

Exordium

Ps. 149 1 Sing to Jehovah a new song,
And his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
2 Let Israel rejoice in his Maker,
Let the sons of Zion exult in their King.

---

§ 88 This ps. is an expansion of Ps. 103[21, 22]. It is further expanded in the Song of the Three Children. It is based on Gen. 1. Its broad outlook suggests the Greek or Maccabean period. Its place at the close of the Psalter indicates that it was one of the seven doxologies added to the earlier collections of hymns by the final editors of the book of Psalms.

[k] 148[6] Or, slightly revising, *which they may not transgress.*

[l] 148[14] *I. e.*, given them might to repel and overthrow their foes.

§ 89 Vs. [6] well describes the author of this Maccabean ps., who was one of the Hasideans or faithful and who probably carried a two-edged sword in the wars of Judas and Simon.

[3]Let them praise his name in the dance,
Make melody to him with timbrel and lyre.

[4]For Jehovah delighteth in his people,
He adorneth the afflicted with victory.
[5]Let the faithful exult in glory,
Let them sing for joy on their beds.
[6]Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,[m]
And a two-edged sword in their hand,
[7]To execute vengeance on the heathen,
And punishment on the peoples,
[8]To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron,
[9]To execute on them the judgment written;[n]
It is an honor for all his faithful ones.

Praise for God-given victories over Israel's heathen foes

§ 90. The Great Doxology, Ps. 150

Ps. 150 [1]Praise God for his holiness,
Praise him for the display of[o] his power,
[2]Praise him for his deeds of might,
Praise him for the abundance of his greatness.

Call to praise Jehovah

[3]Praise him with the blast of the horn,
Praise him with harp and lyre,
[4]Praise him with timbrel and dance,
Praise him with strings and pipe,
[5]Praise him with sounding cymbals,
Praise him with clashing cymbals.

With musical accompaniments

[6]Let everything that hath breath praise Jehovah!

In unison

---

[m] 149^{6} Lit., *in their throat.*

[n] 149^{9} Not only in such books as Dt., but in the prophecies like Ezek. 38, 39, Is. 41^{15}, Mic. 4^{13}, and Zech. 14.

§ 90 This highly liturgical ps. was written as a closing doxology to the entire Psalter. It therefore corresponds to the shorter doxologies appended to the earlier collections. Cf. 41^{13}, 72^{18-20}, 89^{52}, and 106^{48}. It may be dated about 140 B.C.

[o] 150^{1} Lit., *the spreading out of.*

HYMNS OF ADORATION AND TRUST

I. JEHOVAH'S MAJESTY AND GOODNESS REVEALED IN NATURE

Pss. 8, 19^{1-6}, 29, $89^{1, 2, 6-16}$, 104

II. HIS LOVING PROVISIONS FOR MAN

II Sam. 2, Ps. 36^{5-12}, 65, 144^{12-15}, 103, 139

III. THE ASSURANCE OF JEHOVAH'S PROTECTION

Pss. 42, 43, 63, 27^{1-6}, 46, 3, 4, 11, 56, 16, $102^{12-22, 24-28}$, 23, 40^{1-12}, 62, 121, 130, 131, Hab. 3

HYMNS OF ADORATION AND TRUST

I

JEHOVAH'S MAJESTY AND GOODNESS REVEALED IN NATURE

Pss. 8, 19¹⁻⁶, 29, 89¹·²·⁶⁻¹⁶, 104

§ 91. Jehovah's Character as Revealed in Nature and Man, Ps. 8

Ps. 8 [1]Jehovah, our Lord, — *Exordium*
How glorious is thy name in all the earth!

Thou[a] hast spread thy splendor over the heavens. — *Jehovah's might in heaven and on earth*
[2]At the cry of babes and sucklings[b]
Thou hast established strength, because of thine enemies,
By silencing the foe and the avenger.

[3]When I look on the heavens,[c] the work of thy fingers, — *His condescension to man*
The moon and stars which thou hast prepared;
[4]What is man that thou art mindful of him,
Or the son of man that thou visitest him?

[5]For thou hast made him little less than divine,[d] — *Man's God-given authority over all creation*
And thou hast crowned him with glory and honor,
[6]Thou givest him dominion over the works of thy hands,
Making all things subject to him;[e]

Hymns of Adoration and Trust.—The hymns of adoration and trust are, as a rule, earlier, less national, more personal, and more philosophical than the hymns of thanksgiving and praise. Also they are not so closely connected with special events in Israel's history. The date of the individual pss. is less certain and less important. These hymns as a whole constitute the noblest group in the Psalter. Most of them sprang from the period when the Jewish race was the victim of bitter persecution and injustice. Many of them still reflect the stress and anguish amidst which they were born. They present theology not in theory but in action and beget in turn a faith which is not static but kinetic and dynamic.

§ 91 This ps. bears the superscription, *For the musical director. To be sung to a vintage song. Psalm of David.* Its dependence upon Gen. 1 is obvious. Vs. [5], however, reveals familiarity with the account of creation in Gen. 2. Probably the author knew the book of Genesis in its present composite form. The ps. also has certain words and expressions not found in the O.T. except in the writings of the Persian and following periods. The peaceful atmosphere also strongly suggests the prosperous days immediately following the reforms of Nehemiah and Ezra. The ps. is a majestic evening hymn eminently appropriate for public worship. The three-beat measure is prevailingly used except in the first line of the refrain found at the beginning and end of the ps.

[a] 8[1] The Heb. adds *who.*

[b] 8[2] *I. e.*, in response to the cry of the weakest.

[c] 8[3] *Heavens* is, perhaps, but the explanation of a scribe, as the measure and sense are complete without it. Possibly the original read *sun.*

[d] 8[5] Lit., *thou hast made him lack little of God.*

[e] 8[6] Lit., *putting all things under his feet.*

Doxology

7Sheep and oxen, all of them,
Yea, and the beasts of the field,
8The birds of the air and the fish,[f]
That dart through the paths of the sea.

Jehovah, our Lord,
How glorious is thy name in all the earth!

§ 92. The Silent Testimony of the Heavens to Jehovah's Might and Wisdom, Ps. 19[1-6]

Their silent but constant testimony

Ps. 19 1The heavens declare God's glory,
And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
2Day by day[g] they pour forth speech,
Night by night they make known knowledge.
3There is no speech nor words that are spoken,
Not a sound from them is heard;
4[Yet] their voice[h] hath gone out in all the earth,
Their words to the end of the world.
He hath set in them a tent for the sun,
5Which is like a bridegroom, going forth from his canopy.[i]

Glorious movement of the sun

He rejoiceth as a horse to run his course,[j]
6From one end of the heavens he setteth out,

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f 8[8] Lit., *fish of the sea.*

§ 92 This ps. has the common title, *For the music director, A Psalm of David.* Here two distinct poems have been combined: the first, [1-6], in praise of God's glory as revealed in the heavens; the second, [7-14], in praise of the law. Cf. § 177. They were doubtless combined for liturgical use in order to bring these two witnesses of God's glory into suggestive combination and contrast. The first poem is clearly the older and prevailingly employs the four-beat, while the second ps. has the five-beat measure. The full appreciation of God as the Lord of the universe first finds expression in the exilic and post-exilic periods. The author clearly lived in the atmosphere which produced the majestic first chapter of Gen. The influence of certain of the noble Assyr. and Bab. hymns to Shamash, the sun-god, may also be recognized. Vss. [5, 6] have much in common with the ancient hymn:

O Shamash! out of the horizon of the heavens thou issuest forth,
The bolt of the bright heavens thou openest,
The door of heaven thou dost open.
O Shamash! over the world dost thou raise thy head;
O Shamash! with the glory of heaven thou coverest the world.

Equally majestic is the ascription to the setting sun:

O sun-god in the midst of heaven at thy setting,
May the enclosure of the pure heaven greet thee,
May the gate of heaven approach thee,
May the directing god, the messenger who loves thee, direct thy way.
May the glory of thy divinity be established for thee.
O Shamash! warrior hero, may thou be exalted!
O lord of E-babbara, as thou marchest, may thy course be directed!
Direct thy path, march along the path fixed for thy course(?).
O Shamash! judge of the world, director of its laws art thou.

It has also been suggested that the original poem once described in a succeeding stanza the course of the moon across the starry heavens. This certainly is implied in [2]. The later description of the law may well have been substituted for this stanza by the priestly editors who were zealous to remove all traces of the popular moon worship.

g 19[2] Following a suggestion of Dr. A. A. Madsen in translating the Heb. idiom, lit., *day to day, night to night,* as the context absolutely demands, for it is the voiceless testimony not of day and night but of the starry heavens that *has gone out in all the earth* and *in them* that God has prepared a tent for the sun, [4].

h 19[4] Correcting the Heb. as the context demands. The current reading, *line,* is clearly based on a corrupt text.

i 19[5] Modern Jewish marriages still take place under a canopy.

j 19[5] Lit., *a race.*

And to the other end is his circuit,
And nothing can be hid from his heat.

§ 93. Jehovah's Power Revealed in the Thunder-Storm, Ps. 29

Exordium

Ps. 29 1Ascribe glory and honor to Jehovah, ye gods,[k]
Ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength.
2Ascribe to Jehovah the glory due his name;
Worship ye, Jehovah in holy attire.[l]

The thunder reverberating over the Mediterranean

3The voice of Jehovah is on the waters,
The God of glory thundereth.
Jehovah is upon the great waters,
4The voice of Jehovah is powerful,
The voice of Jehovah is majestic!

Over the mountains

5The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars,
Jehovah breaketh the cedars of Lebanon,
6Yea, he maketh them skip like a calf,
Lebanon and Sirion[m] like the young of the wild ox.

And the wilderness and forests

7The voice of Jehovah cleaveth the flaming fire;
8The voice of Jehovah whirleth the wilderness,
Jehovah whirleth about the wilderness of Kadesh;
9The voice of Jehovah twisteth the terebinths,
The voice of Jehovah[n] strippeth the forests.

Jehovah's ability to care for his people

And in his temple everything saith, 'Glory';
10Jehovah sat enthroned upon the flood,
And Jehovah will sit enthroned as king forever.

---

§ 93 This is one of the most poetic and powerful pss. in the Psalter. It opens with the command that the heavenly beings join in praising Jehovah's majesty and power. These divine attributes are then illustrated by the thunder-storm. Wagner, in his powerful opera, *The Flying Dutchman*, has produced something of the same effect. Here, without the accompaniment of music the Heb. poet has reproduced in mere words the effect of the storm. The ps. is written in the four-beat, except the second stanza, which describes the storm in the distance and is in the three-beat measure. This stanza vividly pictures the thunder-cloud as it hangs low over the Mediterranean and the reverberating peals of thunder. The second stanza portrays the storm as it sweeps over the heights of Lebanon and Hermon, breaking the proud cedars and making them skip like calves, while the forked lightning flashes, accompanied by the thunder, Jehovah's voice. Eastward the storm sweeps, until in the third stanza it is described as it rushes out across the Jordan into the wilderness east of the Jordan. Finally, the storm passes, and in the great calm that follows Jehovah is seen, as in Isaiah's vision, enthroned in his temple as he was at the beginning of creation on the great flood. The conclusion of this dramatic ps. is an assurance that Jehovah, the omnipotent, will strengthen and give peace to his people. The ps. began with a vision of Jehovah in heaven above and it ends with the divine King in the midst of his people. It began with a storm and ends in majestic stillness.

The indications of date are few. Vs. 2 implies a well-developed priesthood. In 10 the priestly word for flood is employed, indicating that the ps. is probably post-exilic. Vss. 1, 2 are quoted with slight variations in Ps. 96^{7-9a} and I Chr. 16^{28-29}, so that it must be earlier than the Gk. period. Its recognition of God's revelation through nature connects it closely with the poem of Job, and its date was probably the middle or latter part of the Persian period.

[k] 29^1 *I. e.*, the sons of the gods which appear in the prologue to the book of Job.

[l] 29^2 *I. e.*, the garments of worshippers.

[m] 29^6 Sirion was the Phœnician name of Mount Hermon. Cf. Dt. 3^9.

[n] 29^9 Supplying *the voice of Jehovah* that has fallen out of the Heb.

[11]Jehovah giveth strength to his people;
Jehovah blesseth his people with peace.

§ 94. Jehovah's Incomparable Love, Faithfulness, and Might, Ps. 89[1, 2, 5-14]

Exordium

Ps. 89 [1]I will sing of the lovingkindness of Jehovah forever,
I will make known thy faithfulness to all generations.
[2]By thy command[o] lovingkindness is built up[p] forever,
In the heavens thou dost establish thy faithfulness.

Jehovah's incomparable character

[5]The heavens give thanks for thy wonders, O Jehovah;
Also for thy faithfulness[q] the assembly of the holy ones.
[6]For who is there in the sky to compare with Jehovah?
Who is there among the sons of God[r] like Jehovah?
[7]A God very terrible in the council of the holy ones,
And to be feared above[s] all those who are around about him!
[8]O Jehovah, God of hosts, who is like[t] thee?
Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, and thy faithfulness surround thee!

Invincible

[9]It is thou who rulest the pride of the sea;
When the waves arise, it is thou who stillest them.
[10]Thou didst break Rahab[u] in pieces, as one that is slain.[v]
Thou hast scattered thine enemies[w] with the arm of thy strength.

Creator

[11]The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine;
The world and its fulness, it is thou who hast founded them.
[12]The north and the south, it is thou who hast created them,
Tabor and Hermon rejoice in thy name.

Mighty yet just

[13]Thou, indeed, hast an arm endued with might,
Strong is thy hand, and exalted thy right hand.
[14]Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne;
Lovingkindness and faithfulness go before thy face.

---

§ 94 As has been already noted, § 38, Ps. 89, contains an early post-exilic ps. to which a later psalmist has added the present hymn of adoration in order to adapt the whole to liturgical use. Its literary affinities are with the late post-exilic writings: II Is., Zech., and Job, *e. g.*, the use of the term *holy ones* to designate angels, [5, 7]. Cf. Job 5[1], 15[15], Zech. 14[5]. Its background is the period of hopefulness and quiet following the work of Nehemiah. It belongs, therefore, to the last half of the Persian or the earlier part of the Gk. period.

[o] 89[2] Through a scribal error the Gk. and Lat., *thou hast said*, required at the beginning of [3] as it now stands, has been transferred to the beginning of [2]. Also in the editorial revision of the ps. it has been changed to, *for I said;* also an original, *by thy mouth* or *command*, now reads, *by my command*, and has been connected by the Massoretic editors with the end of [1] rather than with the beginning of [2] as the metre and parallelism require.

[p] 89[2] So Gk. and Syr. Heb., *is established*.

[q] 89[5] Heb. adds *in*, but it destroys the parallelism.

[r] 89[6] *I. e.*, the angels. Cf. Ps. 29[1, 2], Job 5[1].

[s] 89[7] Restoring the Heb. with the aid of the Gk.

[t] 89[8] Emending the practically impossible Heb. by the aid of the well-established parallelism.

[u] 89[10] A reference to the ancient Semitic myth which told of Jehovah's contest at creation with the great monster that represented chaos. Cf. Job 9[13], 26[12].

[v] 89[10] Lit., *pierced through*.

[w] 89[10] The enemies were probably the malignant spirts that were represented as supporting Rahab.

15 Happy is the people that know the joyful sound,[x] — The happiness of his worshippers
They walk, O Jehovah, in the light of thy countenance,
16 In thy name do they rejoice[y] all the day,
And in thy righteousness are they exalted.

§ 95. God's Goodness Revealed in the Works of Creation, Ps. 104

Ps. 104 1 Bless, Jehovah, O my soul! — In the heavens
O Jehovah, my God, thou art very great;
Thou art clothed with honor and majesty,
2 Who puttest on light as a mantle,
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain,
3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters,
Who maketh the clouds his chariot,
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind,
4 Who maketh the winds his messengers,
Fire and[z] flame are his ministers.

5 Thou didst lay[a] the earth upon its foundations, — In the work of creation
That it should not be moved forever.
6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment;[b]
The waters stood above the mountains.
7 At thy rebuke they fled;
At the sound of thy thunder they hasted away,[c]
9 That they may not pass over the bound thou hadst set,
That they may not return to cover the earth.
8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank,
To the place which thou hadst founded for them.

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[x] 89[15] *I. e.*, of the trumpets and melody in connection with the worship of Jehovah at his temple.

[y] 89[16] *I. e.*, Jehovah's people join with the two chief mountains of Palestine, cf. [12], in praising his character.

§ 95 The poet, in [34], describes this ps. as a meditation and expresses the hope that it *will be sweet to Jehovah*. The description is felicitous. It is one of several pss. which reveal the impression that the contemplation of nature made on the deeply religious Heb. mind. The psalmist also had before his mental vision Gen. 1 and 2 in their present composite form, Is. 40[22], Job 38[4-11], so that he probably lived in the Gk. period. It is possible that it was written by a Jew who had visited or resided in Egypt, for it resembles at many points the famous hymn of Amenhotep IV, the great reforming king of Egypt. Cf. Introd., p. 38, Breasted, *Hist. of Eg.*, 371–376. It is also possible that the poet passes abruptly, as in [3, 13], to the third person under the influence of the older Egyptian hymn.

The psalmist shares the common Semitic conception of the universe: the earth is a great plain above which rises the firmament with the sun, moon, and stars. All these are encircled by waters. In the waters above the earth is heaven, the divine chambers in which God dwells and from which he descends on the wind-driven clouds.

[z] 104[4] Revising the Heb. slightly as the context implies. Trad. Heb., *fire of flame*.

[a] 104[5] Lat. and Targ. carry on the preceding construction. The above reading is supported by the parallelism.

[b] 104[6] Or, revising the text, *the deep—like a garment was it covered*, or, *the deep covered it as with a garment*. The idea is that the chaos of waters covered the entire earth.

[c] 104[7] The immediate and logical sequel of [7] is [9]. Vs. [9] after [8] is impossible, for the mountains and valleys could not return to cover the earth as had the waters. After [9] vs. [8] completes the picture of creation. These vss. were transposed because a Heb. scribe confused the somewhat similar initial words in each. Vs. [8b] is usually regarded as the sequel of [7], but its verb does not apply to waters, but solid bodies, as in [5].

In supplying water

10 It is he[d] who sendeth springs into the valleys,
They run between the mountains,
11 They give drink to every beast of the field;
The wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By them the birds of the heavens dwell,[e]
They sing from among the branches.

In providing food for beasts and men

13 He it is who watereth the mountains from his chambers;
The earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.
14 He causeth grass to spring up for the cattle,[f]
And herbage for the service of man,
That he may bring forth bread from the earth,
15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,
And oil to make his face to shine,
And bread that strengtheneth man's heart.

Shelter for the animal world

16 The trees[g] of Jehovah are full of sap,
The cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted,
17 Where the birds do build their nests;
The stork hath her home in the fir trees,
18 The high mountains are for the wild goats,
The rocks are a refuge for the marmots.

In the changing seasons

19 He appointeth the moon for seasons,
The sun to know his going down.
20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night,
Wherein all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
21 The young lions roar for their prey,
And seek their food from God.[h]
22 When the sun ariseth they gather themselves,
And stretch themselves out in their dens.
23 Man goeth forth to his work,
And to his labor[i] until evening.

In the sea and its inhabitants

24 O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works!
In wisdom hast thou made them all;
The earth is full of thy creatures.
25 Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
Wherein are things crawling,[j] innumerable,
Living things both small and great,
26 Leviathan,[k] which thou hast made to play with.

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[d] 104[10] Possibly the direct address was originally used throughout this ps.
[e] 104[12] Probably the order is correct: the streams and the vegetation.
[f] 104[14] Cf. Gen. 3[17-19].
[g] 104[16] *I. e.*, the great trees like the cedars of Lebanon.
[h] 104[21] As in Job 38[41], the beasts look to God as the ultimate source of their supply.
[i] 104[23] Following the superior Gk. and the demands of the context. Heb., *riches*. This reading is due to a slight verbal error.
[j] 104[25] Or, *gliding*, *i. e.*, all kinds of fish and small sea life.
[k] 104[26] The next vs. indicates that the poet is still describing God's creatures. The initial line, *there go the ships*, appears to be from a later scribe who associated ships with the sea.

27 These all wait for thee, — *In his care for all created things*
That thou mayest give them their food in due season.
28 Thou givest to them, they gather it;
Thou openest thy hand, they are well satisfied.
29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled;
Thou takest away their breath, they die.[l]
30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created;
And thou renewest the face of the ground.[m]

31 Let the glory of Jehovah endure forever; — *May he find pleasure in his creation*
Let Jehovah rejoice in his works,
32 Who looketh on the earth, and it trembleth,
He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke.
33 I will sing to Jehovah as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have any being.
34 Let my meditation be sweet to him;
I will find my joy in Jehovah.
35 Bless, Jehovah, O my soul.[n]

II

JEHOVAH'S LOVING PROVISIONS FOR MAN

II Sam. 2, Pss. 36^{5-12}, 65, 144^{12-15}, 103, 139

§ 96. Jehovah's Care for His People, I Sam. 2

I Sam. 2 1b My heart exulteth in Jehovah, — *Praise to Jehovah*
My horn[a] is exalted through my God.[b]
My mouth exulteth[c] over mine enemies,
I rejoice in the deliverance thou hast wrought.
2 For[d] there is none holy like Jehovah,[e]

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[l] 104^{29} A scribe familiar with Ecc. has added *and return to the dust.*

[m] 104^{30} *I. e.*, as at creation thou dost cause the earth to be covered with living things.

[n] $104^{31-34, 35c}$ This closing refrain was probably added to adapt the ps. to liturgical use. A Maccabean scribe has also added:

Let sinners be consumed out of the earth,
And let the wicked be no more.

These lines reflect an entirely different spirit from that which pervades the ps. and reveals the point of view of the Maccabean age, for *sinners* probably refers to the foes of the Jews.

§ 96 This poem does not fit in the mouth of Hannah, for it is a national rather than an individual ps. A later editor placed it in the Samuel history because of the allusion in [5c] to "the barren that hath borne seven." The reference does not apply to Hannah but is rather a common Semitic figure of prosperity. The reference in [10] is apparently to a messianic king. The absence of such allusions in the literature following the deposition of Zerubbabel after the rebuilding of the second temple in 516 B.C. and the prominence of those hopes in the years immediately preceding favor the conclusion that this ps. comes from the days of hopefulness and keen expectancy immediately following the stirring sermons of Haggai in 520 B.C. On the other hand, the references to the godly, the afflicted, and the arrogant point to a date nearer the middle of the Persian period. In any case the ps. is probably post-exilic. Its style is simple and direct. Its faith is strong and its teachings resemble those of the book of Proverbs. Its influence on the Magnificat is obvious. Cf. Lk. 1^{46-53}.

[a] 2^1 Cf., for the same figure, Ps. 92^{10}. The horn was the symbol of the power to accomplish.

[b] 2^1 So Gk., Luc., Lat., and many MSS. Heb., *in Jehovah.*

[c] 2^1 Lit., *is enlarged.* Cf. Is. 57^4.

[d] 2^2 So Gk. and Luc. In the Heb. the *for* has been transposed to the second line.

[e] 2^2 Following the text suggested by the Gk. and Luc., which is strongly supported by the parallelism and metrical structure. Heb., *for there is none beside thee.*

There is none righteous like our God,
And there is no Rock beside thee.

Warning to opposers

3Do not go on speaking haughtily,[f]
Nor let arrogance come from your mouth,
For a God of knowledge is Jehovah,
And by him actions are weighed.[g]
4The bow of the mighty is broken,
But the weak[h] are girded with strength.
5The sated hire themselves out for food,
While the famished cease from toil;[i]
For the barren hath borne seven,
And the mother of many mourneth.

Jehovah's just rule

6Jehovah killeth and giveth life,
Bringeth down to Sheol and bringeth up.
7Jehovah maketh poor and maketh rich,
Bringeth low and also setteth on high,
8He raiseth the poor from the dust,
From the dunghill he raiseth up the needy,
He maketh them sit with the nobles of the people,
And assigneth[j] them an honorable place.[k]

His care for his people

9The feet of his godly ones will he guard,[l]
But the wicked shall perish in darkness,
For by strength a man is not mighty.
10Jehovah will shatter his enemies,[m]
Upon them will he thunder in the heavens.[n]
Jehovah will judge the whole earth;[o]
He will give strength to his king,
And will exalt the horn of his anointed.

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[f] 2[3] So Gk. The Heb. has an unnecessary repetition which is out of harmony with the regular metrical structure of the poem.

[g] 2[3] The standard Heb. text is probably corrupt. It might read, *And evil actions are not right*, lit., *adjusted* (*to the standard*). The marginal reading and a slightly corrected Heb. text give the above reading. This text may have been before the translators of Gk. and Luc., which read, *a God who weigheth actions*. The meaning at least is the same.

[h] 2[4] Lit., *those who stumble*.

[i] 2[5] Slightly correcting the corrupt Heb. Gk. and Luc., *earth*.

[j] 2[8] Lit., *causes them to inherit*.

[k] 2[8] The lines:

For the pillars of the earth are Jehovah's,
And he hath set the world upon them,

are not found in the Gk. and break the close sequence of thought between the preceding line and [9]. It seems clear, therefore, that they are a later addition, as is also the corresponding Gk. rendering,

Granting the prayer to the one who prays,
And blessing the righteous with years.

The latter evidently aimed to adapt the ps. to its present literary setting.

[l] 2[9] This line is lacking in the Gk. and Luc. It may also be a later addition.

[m] 2[10] Correcting the Heb. with the aid of the Gk.

[n] 2[10] Gk., *He hath gone up into the heavens and thundered*. A possible correction of the text reads, *The Almighty in heaven will destroy them*.

[o] 2[10] Lit., *ends of the earth*.

§ 97. Jehovah's Boundless Love and Goodness, Ps. 36[5-12]

His goodness and justice

Ps. 36 [5]Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, is in the heavens,
Thy faithfulness reacheth to the skies,[p]
[6]Thy righteousness is like the mighty mountains,[q]
Thy judgments are like the great deep.
Thou preservest man and beast.[r]

His bountiful provision for man

How precious is thy lovingkindness, O God!
And men trust in the shadow of thy wings.
[8]They are fully satisfied with the rich things of thy house,[s]
And thou makest them drink of thy river of delights;
[9]For with thee is the fountain of life,
And in thy light shall we see light.

Prayer that it may continue to those who trust him

[10]O continue thy lovingkindness to those who know thee,
And thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
[11]Let not the foot of pride come against me,
And let not the hand of transgressors drive me forth.
[12]There have the workers of iniquity fallen,
They are cast down and are unable to arise.

§ 98. Jehovah's Goodness Revealed in His Mercy to Man and in His Plenteous Provision for His Needs, Ps. 65

Man's gratitude due for divine forgiveness and favor

Ps. 65 [1]A song of praise is befitting[t] for thee, O Jehovah,[u] in Zion,
And to thee shall the vow be paid, [2]O thou hearer of prayer.
All flesh shall come to thee [3]on account of their sins;
Yea, though our transgressions have been too great for us,[v] thou, indeed, wilt forgive them.
[4]Happy is the man whom thou choosest and bringest near to dwell in thy courts!
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, the holiness of thy temple.

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§ 97 Two very different themes are treated in Ps. 36. In [1-4] is found a wisdom ps. describing the thoroughly bad man. Cf. § 181. Possibly a later editor combined the two in order to bring into clear contrast Jehovah's goodness and man's perverseness. The feeling of satisfaction and thanksgiving expressed in [5-9] points to the latter part of the Persian period, when Nehemiah's work had brought prosperity to the Jewish community. Possibly [12] is a later Maccabean addition.

[p] 36[5] This vs. is quoted in 57[10] and echoed in 108[5].

[q] 36[6] Lit., *mountains of El.*

[r] 36[6] The Heb. adds *Jehovah*, but it destroys the regular metre of the vs. and is superfluous. Possibly this line is secondary.

[s] 36[8] Lit., *the fatness of thy house*, as in 23[6] and elsewhere in the pss., the faithful are thought of as the guests of Jehovah. *The river of delight* or *pleasures* is evidently the river of Eden. Ezek. 47[3-5] and Zech. 14[8] picture a life-giving stream issuing from the temple.

§ 98 The symmetry of this beautiful ps. has been obscured by the vs. division to which it was subjected in the middle ages. It is written in the emotional five-beat measure by a poet who, like the author of Ps. 23, was keenly appreciative of the privilege of worshipping in Jehovah's temple. Song service and vows are regarded by men as the gifts most pleasing to God. The figure of the earth watered by irrigation, in [9, 10], suggests that he was familiar with the agricultural methods of either Babylonia or Egypt. The universal outlook in [2] also points to a post-exilic date. Vs. [9] contains echoes of the II Is. The background of the ps. is bright and hopeful. It comes either from the latter part of the Persian or the earlier part of the Gk. period.

[t] 65[1] Lit., *is like to thee, i. e.*, befits.

[u] 65[1] Heb., *God;* but this is due to the work of a later editor.

[v] 65[3] So Gk. Heb., *for me.*

For the proofs of God's power in nature

[5]By terrible things thou answerest us in righteousness, O God of our salvation;
Thou that art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, of the coast lands[w] and the distant people,
[6]Who establisheth the mountains by his strength, being girded with might,
[7]Who stilleth the roaring of the seas,[x] the roaring of their waves.
[8]They also who dwell at the ends of the earth fear thy signs,
The outgoings[y] of the morning and evening sing joyously of thee.[z]

And for giving fertility to the land

[9]Thou visitest the earth and waterest it, thou greatly enrichest it,
With the river of God, which is full of water, thou providest their grain,
For so thou, O Jehovah,[a] dost prepare it, [10]saturating its furrows.
Thou settlest its ridges, making it soft with showers,
Thou blessest its growth, thou [11]crownest the year with[b] thy goodness,
And thy paths drip with fatness; [12]the pastures of the wilderness drip,
And the hills are girded with joy; [13]they are clothed with lambs;[c]
The valleys also are covered over with grain; they rejoice and they sing.

§ 99. The Blessedness of Jehovah's People, Ps. 144[12-15]

The domestic bliss

Ps. 144 [12]Our[d] sons are like saplings in the full strength of their youth;
Our daughters are as corner pillars, fitly carved for a palace.

And material prosperity

[13]Our garners are full, affording all kinds of store,
Our sheep are bringing forth thousands, ten thousands in our fields,
[14]Our cattle are with young, there are no miscarriages,
There are no goings forth to war nor outcries in our streets.

Of the nation that trusts God

[15]Happy the people when they have it so!
Happy the people, when Jehovah is their God!

§ 100. Jehovah's Superlative Goodness to Man, Ps. 103

His provisions for man's every need

Ps. 103 [1]Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And all within me, bless his holy name.

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[w] 65[5] Revising the text with Wellhausen.

[x] 65[7] A scribe has added the clause, *and the tumult of the peoples.* It or the preceding clause is secondary, for together they destroy the metre and the figure.

[y] 65[8] Probably an allusion to the song services at sunrise and sunset.

[z] 65[8] Restoring the last part of this line as the parallelism suggests. The thought appears to be that all peoples, east and west, unite in Jehovah's praise.

[a] 65[9] Adding *Jehovah*, required to complete the measure.

[b] 65[10] Supplying the *with* required in English to bring out the logical meaning. The figure of irrigated fields runs through [9, 10].

[c] 65[12] A scribe has added *the flock*.

§ 99 This supplement to the prayer in 144[1-11] has no connection with its context and is, beyond reasonable doubt, a fragment from an independent ps. It breathes the peace and contentment of the Maccabean period.

[d] 144[12] A scribe has added, in order to connect this ps. with the preceding, the relative *which*.

§ 100 This ps. comes from the school of the wise. It is a meditation as well as a prayer of adoration. Its appreciation of Jehovah's character and attitude toward men, its childlike, filial trust, and its faith in his universal kingdom and rule all connect it closely with the teachings of Jesus. Here is the atmosphere in which the Master Builder of Nazareth was reared, and here is the heart of that universal message which made him the Saviour of men. The dependence upon Jer., II Is., and Ps. 90[5, 6], the Aram. words, the didactic note, and the hopeful yet not arrogant spirit of the ps. indicate that it probably comes from the Gk. period.

2 Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits,
3 Who forgiveth[e] all thine iniquities,
Who healeth all thy diseases,
4 Who redeemeth thy life from the grave,[f]
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
5 Who satisfieth thy mouth[g] with good things,
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.[h]

His righteous judgments

6 Jehovah is a doer of righteous acts,
And of judgment[i] for all who are oppressed.
7 He kept making known his ways to Moses,
His deeds to the children of Israel.

His long suffering

8 Jehovah is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger and abundant in mercy.
9 He doth not always strive;
Nor doth he restrain his anger forever.

His mercy in forgiving sin

10 He hath not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is his lovingkindness toward those who fear him.
12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far doth he remove our transgressions from us.

His fatherly pity

13 Like as a father[j] pitieth his children,
So Jehovah pitieth those who fear him.
14 For he, indeed, knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are dust.[k]

His tender consideration for finite man

15 Frail man—his days are as grass;
As a blossom of the field, so he blossometh;[l]
16 For the wind passeth over it and it is gone;
And the place thereof knoweth it no more.[m]
17 But the lovingkindness of Jehovah is everlasting,[n]
And his righteousness to children's children,
18 To those who faithfully keep his covenant,
And remember his precepts to do them.

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[e] 103^{3} Lit., *maketh light of, tosseth aside.*
[f] 103^{4} *I. e.*, from death; lit., *the Pit.*
[g] 103^{5} Gk. and Lat., *thy desire.* Late Jewish rendering, *mouth.*
[h] 103^{5} Cf., for this figure, Is. 40^{31}.
[i] 103^{6} Lit., *judgments.*
[j] 103^{13} For the further use of the figure of father, cf. Ex. $4^{22, 23}$, Hos. 11^{1-4}.
[k] 103^{14} *I. e.*, that we are made of dust, Gen. 2^{7}.
[l] 103^{15} With Briggs, bringing out the assonance of the Heb.
[m] 103^{16} Taken from Job 7^{10}.
[n] 103^{17} A scribe has added in the Heb., from ^{11}, *to those who fear him.* The same scribe possibly added ^{18}, for it lacks the metrical symmetry of the rest of the ps. and limits the universality of the passage. It also defines piety in the restricted, late priestly sense. Vss. $^{19 ff.}$ are the immediate logical sequel of ^{17}. The same scribe has added *Jehovah* at the beginning of ^{19}, although it destroys the metrical symmetry of the line and was made necessary only by the insertion of ^{18}.

Let all his creatures in heaven and in earth unite in praising the divine King

[19]He hath established his throne in the heavens;
And his dominion ruleth over all.
[20]Bless Jehovah, ye, his angels,
Ye mighty in strength[o] who do his word.[p]
[21]Bless Jehovah, all ye his hosts,
Ye ministers of his, who do his pleasure.
[22]Bless Jehovah, all ye his works,
In all places of his dominion;
Bless Jehovah, O my soul.

§ 101. God's Omniscience and Immanence, Ps. 139

Jehovah's complete knowledge of man

Ps. 139 [1]O Jehovah, thou hast searched me and known me,
[2]Thou knowest my sitting down and mine uprising,
Thou readest my thought[q] afar off.
[3]Thou determinest[r] my path and my lying down,
Thou art acquainted with all my ways.
[4]Verily there is not a word on my tongue
But thou, O Jehovah, knowest well!
[5]Behind and before thou dost enfold[s] me,
Over me thou hast laid thy hand.
[6]Such[t] knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain to it.

The impossibility of escaping him

[7]Whither can I go from thy spirit,
Or whither can I flee from thy presence?
[8]If I ascend up into the heaven, thou art there,[u]
If I make Sheol my bed,[v] lo, thou art there;
[9]Should I take the wings of the morning,[w]
Should I dwell at the end of the sea,
[10]Even there thy hand would grasp[x] me,
Thy right hand would hold me fast.
[11]If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide[y] me,

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[o] 103[20] *I. e.*, the angels.

[p] 103[20] So Syr. Heb. adds *giving heed to the voice of his word.*

§ 101 This ps. is a majestic monologue addressed to Jehovah. Its originality and depth of thought give it a unique place among Israel's lyrics. The famous Jewish commentator, Aben Ezra, called it *the crown of the Psalter*. Nowhere in the O.T. is the omniscience and immanence and unceasing care of God set forth more nobly. Amos, in 9[2-4], was the first of the prophets to declare that Jehovah's rule extended throughout the universe. In [13-15] there are traces of the Gk. scientific spirit. Unfortunately, the text in the latter part of the ps. is uncertain, owing to scribal errors. Possibly [19-24] are later additions. The ps. is individual. It probably comes from the Gk. period and shows the influence of the thought of the wise.

[q] 139[2] Following the reading of certain MSS. and the demands of the context. Another possible reading is *friends*, but this is not supported by the parallelism.

[r] 139[3] Or *searchest out*.

[s] 139[5] The Heb. word also may mean *beset*. The Gk., Syr., and Lat. have a text meaning *to form*. The context implies watchful care, not an antagonistic attitude.

[t] 139[6] Gk. and Syr., *thy knowledge*.

[u] 139[8] For the same idea, cf. Am. 9[2].

[v] 139[8] Lit., *spread out Sheol*, *i. e.*, the lower world.

[w] 139[9] Gk. and Syr., *my wings to the dawn*. At any rate the antithesis is between the East, represented by dawn, and the West, represented by the far-extending sea.

[x] 139[10] Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads, *lead*.

[y] 139[11] The meaning of the Heb. verb is not certain.

And the night cast its curtain about me,[y]
12 Even the darkness, for thee, is not dark,[z]
But the night shineth as the day.[a]

13 For it is thou who didst form my reins, **His creation of man's body**
Thou screenedst me in the womb of my mother,
14 Thou[b] hast made me[c] mysteriously and wonderfully,
Thou knowest my soul[d] right well.
15 My frame was not hid from thee
At the time when I was made in secret,[e]
And wrought in the depths of the earth.

16 All mine days[f] thine eyes did see, **His omniscience**
And in thy book they were all inscribed,
Even the days that were pre-ordained for me,
When as yet none of them were mine.[g]
17 How precious also are thy thoughts,[h] O God!
How great is the sum of them all![i]
18 If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand;
When I awake I am still with thee.[j]

19 O that thou wouldst slay the wicked, O God! **Protestation of complete loyalty to him**
Depart from me therefore, ye bloody men;
20 For they speak against thee with wicked intent,
And thine enemies take thy name in vain.
21 Do I not hate them, O Jehovah, who hate thee?[k]
And do I not loath those who rise up against thee?
22 I hate them with perfect hatred,
They have become to me mine enemies.
23 Search me, O God, and know my heart,
Try me, and know my secrets,
24 And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

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[z] 139^{12} Or, *is not too dark for thee*. AmRV, *hideth not from thee*.

[a] 139^{12} A scribe has added in the Heb. the explanatory note, *as the darkness as the light*. The Gk. substitutes this for the preceding couplet.

[b] 139^{14} A scribe has prefixed to this line *I praise thee for*, which destroys its logical and metrical unity.

[c] 139^{14} So Gk., Syr., and Lat. Heb., *I am made*. It also adds *thy works*.

[d] 139^{14} A more literal but less metrical translation would be *me*, for the Heb. word is here used as a reflexive pronoun, as frequently.

[e] 139^{15} Possibly this line is secondary. It introduces an idea alien to Heb. thought.

[f] 139^{16} This vs. is doubtful. The Heb. is usually translated *unformed substance* or *embryo*. This translation fits the immediate context but is not supported by the following verb and pronominal suffix which are plural. The Heb. word is probably due to a confusion of the two Heb. words meaning *all my days*. At best the translation of the vs. is uncertain.

[g] 139^{16} Connecting the words *to me* or *mine* with the preceding line, as the metre requires.

[h] 139^{17} Again, as in [2], slightly revising the Heb., which reads, *thy friends*, but makes little sense.

[i] 139^{17} Lit., *heads of them*. The author probably had in mind the totals. Cf. Ps. 119^{160}, *The sum of thy word is truth*, or Ex. 30^{12}.

[j] 139^{18} This is scarcely an assertion of the belief in personal immortality, as it has sometimes been regarded, but of the conviction that, awake or asleep, Jehovah's care is ever about his children.

[k] 139^{21} Contrary to our more enlightened thought, the later Jews regarded hatred of Jehovah's enemies as a positive virtue.

III

THE ASSURANCE OF JEHOVAH'S PROTECTION

Pss. 42, 43, 63, 27[1-6], 46, 3, 4, 11, 56, 16, 102[12-22, 24-28], 23, 40[1-12], 62, 121, 130, 131, Hab. 3

§ 102. The Longing That God Alone Can Satisfy, Pss. 42, 43

Longing for a vision of God

Ps. 42 [1]As the hart panteth after the water brooks,[a]
So my soul longeth for thee, O Jehovah,[b]
[2]My soul thirsteth for Jehovah, for the living God.[c]
When shall I come and appear before Jehovah?[d]
[3]My tears are my food day and night,
While they[e] continually say to me, 'Where is thy God?'

The contrast between the past and present

[4]These things I remember and I pour out my soul within me;
How I passed on with the multitude and led them slowly to Jehovah's house,
With joyful sound and praise, a multitude in festal march.[f]

Refrain

[5]Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
Why art thou disquieted[g] within me?
Wait thou for Jehovah, for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the salvation of my[h] countenance [6]and my God.

Faith triumphant over present doubt

My soul is cast down within me, therefore I remember thee,
From the land of the Jordan and the Hermons and Mount Mizar.[i]

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§ 102 Pss. 42 and 43 were originally one hymn, for, unlike the pss. which precede and follow, it has no superscription, and the same refrain, found in 42[5, 11] and in 43[5], binds the whole together. This hymn was evidently written by an exile who had been banished from Jerusalem and apparently had found refuge in the upper Jordan near the foot of Mount Hermon. As king or high priest or Levite, he had participated prominently in the temple service, 42[4]. Exiled among the heathen, he was compelled daily to face the taunts of his enemies, [10]. His chief lament, however, was that he was unable to share in the worship of the temple; but his faith enabled him to rise above his sorrows and to cherish the unwavering hope that he would yet be restored to Jerusalem, 42[11]. Certain modern commentators, *e. g.*, Duhm, identify the poet with the high priest Onias III, who was driven from Jerusalem by Scopas, commander of Ptolemy Epiphanes. The *man of deceit* in 43[1] is identified with Simon or the traitorous Jason. While this identification is possible, it is probable, in view of the close parallelism between this ps. and 63, that the author was a high priest or Levite banished from Jerusalem at the time when Jehoiachin (597 B.C.) was

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[a] 42[1] *I. e.*, the Eastern wadies, in which the water disappears in the late spring and runs underground, only occasionally emerging to slake the thirst of man and beast.

[b] 42[1] So Syr. and Targ. A later editor has systematically changed the original *Jehovah* to *Elohim* (*God*) throughout this and the following group of pss. In the translation which follows the original has been restored.

[c] 42[2] Or, *God of my life*.

[d] 42[2] Correcting the Heb. with the aid of the Syr. and Targ.

[e] 42[3] So Syr. and certain other MSS. and the parallel in [10]. The Heb. has lost the pronominal suffix.

[f] 42[4] This and the following line has possibly suffered in transmission. The Gk. and Syr. have a somewhat different rendering, but the reference is clearly to the solemn march on the great festal days.

[g] 42[5] So Gk., Syr., Sym., and the similar refrain in [11] and 43[5].

[h] 42[5] Again restoring the corrupt Heb. with the aid of the Gk., Syr., and subsequent parallels.

[i] 42[6] The psalmist had evidently found refuge in the upper Jordan valley near Mount Hermon. Mizar, which means little, was probably the designation of one of the lesser peaks near Mount Hermon.

7Deep calleth unto deep at the sound of thy cataracts;[j]
Thy breakers and thy billows have all passed over me.[k]
9I say to God, my Rock, Why hast thou forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning under the oppression of mine enemy?
10While there is a shattering in my bones, my adversaries deride me?
While they say to me all the day long, 'Where is thy God?'

Why art thou cast down, O my soul, — Refrain
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Wait thou for Jehovah, for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the salvation of my countenance and my God.

43 1Judge me, and plead my cause against an unkind people;
From the man of deceit and wickedness do thou deliver me, O Jehovah;[l]
2For thou, O God of my refuge, why dost thou reject me?
Why must I go about mourning under the oppression of mine enemy?
3Oh send forth thy light and thy truth; they, indeed, will lead me.[m]
Let them bring me to the mount of thy holiness, to the place where thou dwellest;
4And I will come unto the altar of Jehovah, to the God of my rejoicing;[n]
I will exult and praise thee with the lyre, O Jehovah my God.

5Why art thou cast down, O my soul, — Refrain
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Wait thou for Jehovah, for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the salvation of my countenance and my God.

§ 103. An Exile's Longing and Confidence in God, Ps. 63

Ps. 63 1O Jehovah, thou art my God; earnestly I seek thee;[o] — Longing for the service of the sanctuary
For thee my soul thirsteth,

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carried into captivity. The ps. pulsates with deep emotion. It was written by a lover of God and of his worship and abounds in original and powerful ideas and figures of speech. The measure, under the stress of feeling, rises at times from the prevailing three-beat to the four and, in the concluding section, to the five-beat measure.

[j] 42[7] A reference to the rushing streams which break out from the rock on the southern side of Mount Hermon.

[k] 42[7] A scribe has added the following lines, which introduce a thought entirely alien to the context and lacking the regular metrical form that characterizes the ps.:

By day Jehovah commandeth his lovingkindness,
And by night his song is with me,
My prayer is to the God of my life.

[l] 43[1] Transferring the word *Jehovah*, Heb., *God*, from the first line, where it destroys the metre, to the second line, where it completes it.

[m] 43[3] Possibly certain MSS., which read, *comfort me*, have retained the original.

[n] 43[4] Following one MS., which is strongly supported by the context, and reading the following verb as the first pers. sing. rather than the imperfect. The Heb. text has evidently been corrupted at this point.

§ 103 In point of view this ps. is closely related to 42, 43. The author has participated in the joyous worship of the temple and now yearns passionately for a renewal of the same privilege. His faith in God, however, is undaunted by his enforced exile or by the foes who seek his life. He feels the divine presence guarding him and upholding him wherever he may be. The intro-

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[o] 63[1] The first line of this ps., as frequently in three-beat pss., begins with an impressive four-beat line.

For thee my flesh longeth,
As a parched land fainteth for water,[p]
2 As thee I beheld in the sanctuary,[q]
Seeing thy power and thy glory.

Praise of Jehovah's goodness

3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life,
My lips will ever praise thee.
4 So will I bless thee while I live,
I will lift up my hands in thy name.
5 I[r] shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness,[s]
And my mouth[t] shall praise thee with joyful lips.

God's abiding presence

6 Verily[u] I remember thee upon my couch,
On thee I meditate in the night watches,
7 For thou hast been to me a help,
And in the shadow of thy wings I rejoice.
8 My soul cleaveth close[v] to thee;
Thy right hand taketh hold of me.

Fate of the pursuers

9 And those who seek to destroy[w] my life
Shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
10 They shall be delivered to the power of the sword,
They shall become a portion for jackals;
11 But the king will rejoice in Jehovah;
Everyone that sweareth by him will glory.[x]

§ 104. Confidence in Jehovah's Protection, Ps. 27[1-6]

Trust in Jehovah in the hour of peril

Ps. 27 1 Jehovah is my life and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
Jehovah is the refuge of my life; whom shall I dread?

---

duction of the king in the last vs. presents a difficult problem. Is the entire ps. the prayer of a royal exile like Jehoiachin? Possibly, but it seems more probable that it was uttered by a contemporary and a loyal supporter of the exiled king and that it comes from the early part of the Bab. period. Vss. [9-11] have been regarded by certain scholars as a later addition, but the reference is clearly to a Heb. king, and it ill fits either of the Mac. rulers who assumed that title. These vss. have the same measured beat and the regular six-line structure that characterise the preceding strophes of this poem. They also constitute a natural ending to this impassioned hymn of adoration and trust.

[p] 63[1] The present Heb. reads, *In a dry and weary land where no water is.* This makes little sense and is not in accord with the hopeful spirit of the ps. Evidently the line has suffered in transmission. The above rendering is based on a conservative revision of the text. Briggs translates, *as a dry land it faints for thee;* Duhm, *as a dry, waterless land.*

[q] 63[2] Recalling the joy that he had in beholding the public worship in the temple and, like Isaiah (Is. 6), perceiving the divine reality symbolised by that worship.

[r] 63[5] Lit., *my soul.*

[s] 63[5] Possibly *fatness*, which destroys the metrical symmetry of this line, is secondary.

[t] 63[5] *Mouth* is not found in the Gk. and may be an addition.

[u] 65[6] Or, *when.*

[v] 63[8] Lit., *cleaveth after thee.*

[w] 63[9] Heb., *to destroy it.*

[x] 63[11] A scribe has apparently added the explanatory gloss, *For the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.*

§ 104 Commentators are generally agreed that Ps. 27 contains two independent poems. The first has the five-beat measure and is uttered either by the community or by its leader. The other, [7-14], cf. § 158, is in the three-beat measure and was written by a private person. The invincible faith which this ps. expresses is timeless. Its thought is related on the one side to 42, 43,

2 Whenever evil-doers come upon me to devour my flesh,
They who are mine adversaries and my foes, they stumble and fall.
3 Though a host should encamp against me, mine heart will not fear,
Though war should be declared against me, I will still be confident.

4 One thing I ask from Jehovah, that will I seek:[y] — Protection and glad service in his temple
That I may have a vision of the beauty of Jehovah, and that I may inquire in his temple.
5 Verily he will hide me in his[z] covert, in the day of trouble;
He will conceal me in the secret of his tent, he will set me upon a rock.
6 And now he will lift up my head[a] above mine enemies around about me,
And I will offer in his tabernacle sacrifices with loud rejoicing;
I will sing, yea, praises I will sing to Jehovah!

§ 105. Jehovah the Refuge of His People, Ps. 46

Ps. 46 1 Jehovah[b] is ours, a refuge and a stronghold; — Jehovah's care for his people
A help easily found[c] in a time of trouble.
2 Therefore we fear not, though the earth be moved,[d]

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and 65, in its passionate longing for the service of the temple, and on the other to 46, in its atmosphere of turmoil and its dauntless confidence in Jehovah's power to deliver. It may be one of the few hymns that have come down from the pre-exilic temple, but more probably it was written during the early part of the Persian period.

[y] 27[4] A marginal note based on [5] and 23[6] has been introduced by scribes to explain this vs. It is impossible to construe it syntactically and it is inconsistent with the context. It reads, *I dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life.*

[z] 27[5] Following certain versions and the demands of the context.

[a] 27[6] So Gk., Syr., and Lat. Heb., *my head shall be lifted up.*

§ 105 This is one of the great pss. of the Psalter. It is immortalized in Luther's *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.* It is unsurpassed in the majesty of its diction and the breadth of its outlook. At the same time its thought is as simple as the faith which it expresses is strong. Its structure is exceedingly artistic and well balanced. It consists of three stanzas of six lines, each concluding with the stirring refrain:

Jehovah of hosts is with us,
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

Probably through a scribal error it has been omitted after [3]. The figure in the opening stanza is that of earthquake and flood. In [3] there is possibly a reminiscence of the overwhelming flood in the days of Noah. The second stanza develops the thought that in the midst of this wave of ruin and chaos Jerusalem, the dwelling place of the Most High, stands unmoved, because Jehovah, who rules over all nature, has taken up his abode within her. The third stanza presents a glorious picture of the period when war should cease and Jehovah's rule should be established throughout all the world. The breadth of outlook suggests the teachings of the II Is. Cf. especially 40–48. The description of the destruction of the instruments of war and the establishment of universal peace recall such late exilic passages as Is. 9[4] and 11[1-10]. The expectation that Jehovah's rule would be established throughout all the world allies it with the post-exilic predictions found in Zech. 3, 8, Mic. 4[1-4], and Pss. 96–100. The immediate background of this ps. is evidently a period of great world changes. Not one nation, but many nations, figure in the drama of history to which it alludes. It is also a period when a new sense of confidence and security has come to Jehovah's people. Certain scholars in the past have identified the political situation with the overthrow of Sennacherib in the days of Hezekiah, about 690 B.C. The psalmist may have had in mind this incident in Israel's early history, but not one but many hostile nations figure on the broad horizon which he contemplated. Briggs (*Pss.*, I, 393–4) identifies it with the days of the Scythian invasion early in the reign of Josiah. But the missionary ideals and the broad outlook of the psalmist point, beyond reasonable doubt, to an exilic or post-exilic period. Two periods in Israel's history fully satisfy the implications and literary relationships of this ps. One is that which began in 545 with the conquest of southwestern Asia by Cyrus and ended with the firm establishment of the rule of Darius about 518 B.C. It was pre-eminently a period when *nations raged and kingdoms tottered.* From the contemporary writings of Haggai and Zechariah we know that the hopes that Jehovah would speedily establish his universal kingdom rose high in the hearts of the Jews. This

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[b] 46[1] Heb. *God,* due to the revision of a later scribe.

[c] 46[1] Lit., *found exceedingly.*

[d] 46[2] Slightly revising the Heb. text, which is obviously corrupt.

And though the mountains totter into the heart of the sea;
Though its waves[e] roar; [3]its waters foam,
Though mountains do shake with the swelling of its [4]flood,[f]

Refrain

Jehovah of hosts is with us,
The God of Jacob is our refuge.[g]

His provisions for the needs of his holy city

His streams make glad the city of Jehovah,
The holy dwelling place of the Most High.
[5]Jehovah is in the midst of her, she cannot totter;
Jehovah will help her at the turn of the morn.[h]
[6]Nations raged, kingdoms tottered,
When he uttered his voice the earth melted.

Refrain

[7]Jehovah of hosts is with us,
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

His overthrow of hostile nations

[8]Come, contemplate the works of Jehovah.[i]
[9]He is about to make wars to cease unto the end of the earth.
The bow he breaketh, and the spear he shattereth;
Yea, he burneth the chariots with fire.[j]
[10]Be still, and know that it is I, Jehovah,
Exalted among the nations, exalted in the earth.

Refrain

[11]Jehovah of hosts is with us,
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

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majestic song may have been sung by one who joined with the temple builders in response to the stirring call of Haggai in 520 B.C. If so, he was in thorough sympathy with the hopes expressed in Zech. 1–3. The position of the ps. in the Psalter well accords with this date.

The other possible period is the earlier part of the days immediately following the conquest of Alexander the Great. Again nations were raging and kingdoms were tottering. Through this troublesome period Israel's faith in Jehovah and its consciousness of keeping his law alone preserved it. There is, however, in this ps. a universal note which makes the question of its exact date comparatively unimportant. The faith which it expresses is timeless. Grounded on the experiences of the past it fearlessly contemplated the terrors of the present and the future. It voices the unshakable conviction of Israel's prophets that, in keeping with Jehovah's gracious purpose, *the best is yet to be.* It also presents that ideal of perfect peace for which the persecuted and oppressed sighed through all the ages.

[e] 46[3] Supplying the word *waves*, implied and absolutely demanded by the context. It was probably omitted by a scribe who regarded it as a mere repetition of *sea.*

[f] 46[4] Following the suggestion of Briggs in connecting the word *flood* with the preceding vs. The reference is apparently to the waters under the earth, from whence the ancient Semites believed came the perennial supply of water which gushed out through the many springs and fountains. This great deep under the earth was probably conceived of by the psalmist as the source from which came the brooks mentioned in [4].

[g] 46[4] Supplying the refrain that is found at the end of [6, 10].

[h] 46[5] *I. e.*, at the critical moment of her greatest weakness.

[i] 46[8] The line, *What desolations he hath made in the earth*, is secondary, for, as Duhm notes, it is prosaic, superfluous, and destroys the sequence of thought and the symmetry of the stanza.

[j] 46[9] Possibly this line is also secondary.

§ 106. Confidence in Jehovah's Protecting Care, Ps. 3

Taunts of numerous foes

Ps. 3 [1]O Jehovah, how many are my foes!
Many are rising up against me,
[2]Many are saying of me:
'For him there is no help in his God.'[k]

Jehovah's protecting presence

[3]But thou, O Jehovah,[l] art a shield about me,
My glory and the lifter up of my head.
[4]Whenever I call aloud to Jehovah,
He answereth me from his holy mountain.[m]

Resulting peace in the midst of foes

[5]I laid me down and slept,
I awaked, for Jehovah was sustaining me.
[6]I fear not myriads of people,
Who are arrayed on all sides against me.

Jehovah's deliverance of his people

[7]For all[n] of my foes hast thou smitten,
The teeth of the wicked hast thou broken,[o]
[8]Thine, O Jehovah, is the deliverance;
And upon thy people resteth thy blessing!

§ 107. Serene Confidence in Jehovah in the Midst of Slandering Foes, Ps. 4

Invocation, Hear, O Lord

Ps. 4 [1]When I call, answer me, O God who vindicatest me!
In the time of distress give me room,[p]
Show me favor, and hear my prayer.

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§ 106 This ps. opens with the superscription found both in the Heb. and Gk., *A Psalm of David, when he fled from his son Absalom.* The psalmist or else a later editor clearly had in mind the incidents in David's life recorded in II Sam. $16^{7, 8}$, $17^{1-3, 11}$. From the contents of the ps., and especially vs. [7], it appears that the speaker is either a ruler or the head of a party or else the community itself. The reference in [6] to myriads of hostile peoples favors the conclusion that it is a collective ps. spoken in behalf of the community as a whole. Vs. [8] confirms this. On the other hand, if this and the ps. which follows it in the Psalter are from the same author, they would both seem to voice the feelings and confidence of the faithful party in the post-exilic community.

The indications as to the exact date of the ps. are few. *Holy mountain* in [4] points rather definitely to the second temple. Foes still ring the psalmist about, although he looks back to a great overthrow that they have received at the hand of Jehovah. The atmosphere of danger and stress and the contrasting calm faith of the psalmist are characteristic of the pss. which come from the early part of the Persian period following the rebuilding of the temple.

The structure of the ps. is remarkably symmetrical. There are four stanzas of four three-beat lines. *Selah*, at the end of [2, 4, 8], corresponds to this logical division. The first and third stanzas each contain two synthetic couplets; the second and fourth each a synon. followed by a synth. couplet. Stanza II is antithetic to I and IV is synthetic to III.

[k] 3^2 This phrase is exceedingly unusual in the Davidic collection of pss. to which 3 belongs. The Gk. appears to have inserted the phrase before, *to him*, suggesting that possibly it has come in from the margin.

[l] 3^3 The emphatic *thou* suffices to make the meaning clear. *O Jehovah* may be a later insertion.

[m] 3^4 *I. e.*, the temple at Jerusalem.

[n] 3^7 The vs. in the Heb. opens with *Arise, O Jehovah, help me, my God;* but this is out of all keeping with the context which expresses only calm trust. The line is also out of harmony with the regular metre of the ps. The direct sequel of the preceding vs. is [7b].

[o] 3^7 Lit., *struck on the jaw.* Possibly the last word is a scribal addition.

§ 107 This ps. opens with the superscription, *To the musical director. With strong music. Psalm of David.* It is an evening prayer, the companion of Ps. 3, which is a morning prayer. There are two striking points of literary resemblance. Cf. [6a] and 3^2, [8a] and 3^{5a}, which suggest that both are the work of the same author. Both breathe the same serene confidence in Jehovah's

[p] 4^1 Lit., *make room for me.*

Warning to slandering foes

[2]Ye men of rank,[q] how long will ye turn my honor into reproach,[r]
Will ye love falsehood, seek after a lie?
[3]But know that Jehovah hath shown me wonderful kindness,[s]
Jehovah heareth, when I call to him
[4][Ye men of rank],[t] Tremble and sin not,[u]
Commune with yourselves[v] on your bed, and be still,
[5]Bring the sacrifices of righteousness and trust in Jehovah.

The perfect peace of the godly

[6]Many are saying, 'O that he[w] would show us prosperity,[x]
Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us!'
O Jehovah,[y] [7]gladness hast thou put within my heart
More than is theirs when their grain and new wine is plentiful,
[8]In perfect peace I lie down and slumber,
For thou[z] makest me dwell, though alone,[a] in safety.

§ 108. The Courage Born of Faith, Ps. 11

Reply to the voice of fear

Ps. 11 [1]In Jehovah do I put my trust,
How then can ye say to me:
'Flee as a bird to the[b] mountains,
[2]For the wicked are bending the bow,
They have fitted their arrow to the string
Under darkness to shoot at the rightminded.
[3]When the foundations are being torn down,
The righteous—what hath he done?'

Assurance of Jehovah's just judgment of men

[4]Jehovah is in his holy temple;
Jehovah is in heaven, his throne;

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power to protect and reflect the same environment of malicious foes. The psalmist's faith is also based on actual experience. He is a man of prominence in the community or else is speaking for the party of the pious. The temple is in existence and he is a supporter of its services, [5]. In [6] and [8] he is acquainted with the formula which appears in the high priest's blessing of Nu. 6[24-26]. The peculiar phrase, *right sacrifices*, in [5] is evidently taken from Dt. 33[19]. Vss. [7b, 8] also recall Dt. 33[28]. That the ps. was written under the shadow of the second temple seems clear. Like many pss. of the first Davidic collection, it probably voices the religious trust of the faithful who suffered much at the hands of the mercenary rulers until Nehemiah came to inspire a nobler spirit and a higher ideal in the community as a whole. Cf. Introd., p. 43.

[q] 4[2] So in 49[2], where *men of rank*, lit., *sons of men*, are compared with ordinary men.

[r] 4[2] So Heb., Syr., Targ., and Sym. Gk., *will ye be obstinate, why do ye love falsehood*. The latter may be the original, but the Heb. yields a good meaning, *i. e.*, how long will ye seek to ruin my reputation? This also best accords with the thought of [3].

[s] 4[3] Correcting the text with the aid of the context and certain MSS.

[t] 4[4] The metrical deficiencies in this line suggest that *ye men of rank* have fallen out.

[u] 4[4] Gk., *be angry*, but this possible interpretation of the Heb. does not fit the context.

[v] 4[4] Lit., *say in your hearts*.

[w] 4[6] Or, *who will show us prosperity*.

[x] 4[6] The priestly blessing of Nu. 6[26]; *i. e.*, show favor by bringing material prosperity.

[y] 4[6] Joining this word to the next vs., as in the Syr., supported by the context.

[z] 4[8] The Heb. adds *Jehovah*, but the emphatic *thou* renders this unnecessary and the metre indicates that it is an addition.

[a] 4[8] Lit., *altogether*.

§ 108 This ps. has the superscription, *For the musical director*. *To David*. The same taunting enemies within the community figure in this ps. as in most of those found in the early Davidic collection. Trust in Jehovah is the one source of confidence to the psalmist and to the class that he represents. Jehovah and the universe are viewed from the broadened point of view that came from the experiences of the exile. The date of the ps. is to be found some time after the rebuilding of the second temple and before the reforms of Nehemiah. It may be from the author of 3.

[b] 11[1] So Gk. and Lat. Heb., *your* mountain.

His eyes behold the afflicted,[c]
His open eyes[d] test the sons of men;
5 He[e] testeth the righteous and the wicked;
He[f] abhorreth the lover of violence,
6 He raineth fiery coals[g] upon the wicked,
Brimstone[h] and a burning wind shall be their portion;[i]
7 For Jehovah loveth a righteous man,[j]
His face will the upright behold.

§ 109. Confidence in Jehovah Amidst Malicious Foes, Ps. 56

Petition for divine pity and help

Ps. 56 1 Be merciful to me, O Jehovah,[k] for man doth crush me,
Fighting, he doth daily oppress me. .
2 Mine enemies constantly crush me,
For they are many who fight against me.[l]
O Most High, 3 in the day that I am afraid,
I, indeed, put my trust in thee.
4 In Jehovah I openly[m] boast,
In Jehovah do I fearlessly trust;
What then can flesh do to me?

For vengeance upon malignant, treacherous foes

5 All the day long they vex me with words,[n]
All their plans against me are for evil;
6 They gather together, they lie in ambush;[o]
They it is, who dog my footsteps,
While they lie in wait for my life.

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[c] 11[4] So Gk. The object has fallen out of the Heb.

[d] 11[4] Lit., *eyelids;* it is the poet's picturesque way of describing Jehovah's searching, all-seeing eye.

[e] 11[5] Heb., *Jehovah*, but this is probably an addition.

[f] 11[5] Lit., *his soul.*

[g] 11[6] Slightly correcting the Heb. with the aid of the Gk.

[h] 11[6] Slightly correcting the Heb. with the aid of the Gk.

[i] 11[6] Lit., *portion of their cup.*

[j] 11[7] Cf. Mt. 5[8], *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.* The Heb. adds, probably as the result of dittography, *righteousness.*

§ 109 This ps. has suffered much through scribal errors and additions. It is a noble example of faith triumphant over human injustice and fear. It is not clear whether it is an individual or national ps. The individual note is exceedingly strong. The psalmist evidently here expresses his own personal feelings and experiences. At the same time [7] implies that the foes to whom he refers are hostile peoples and that, therefore, he is speaking in behalf of the Jewish community as a whole. Vs. [2], where he speaks of the many who fight against him, carries the same implication. In any case the ps. probably comes from the earlier part of the Persian period. Vs. [12] implies that the temple service is highly developed. Hostile foes lurk on every side. Apparently no strong protecting wall as yet encircles Jerusalem. The Jews are exposed to constant attack from their enemies. It is a time of affliction and calamity, when Jehovah's people look to him as their only hope and source of protection. The troublesome days preceding the appearance of Nehemiah furnish the natural background of this noble ps.

[k] 56[1] Restoring the original reading *Jehovah* here and elsewhere in the ps., since this is one of a group of pss. in which a later editor has systematically substituted the name *God* for *Jehovah.*

[l] 56[2] Transferring the last word of [2] to the beginning of [3], as the metre and the context demand.

[m] 56[4] So Lat. and the parallel in vs. [10]. Heb., *his word*. The restored Heb. reads, lit., *word*, and the line apparently means, *I will boast my words, i. e.*, openly.

[n] 56[5] Heb., *they vex my words*, but the Lat. and the parallel line indicate that the above rendering in all probability represents the original.

[o] 56[6] Possibly the text is here corrupt although the general meaning is clear.

[7]Because of their[p] iniquity recompense[q] them,
In anger cast down the people.

Protestation of trust in ultimate deliverance

[8]It is thou who recordest my wanderings,
Put thou my tears[r] in thy bottle.[s]
[9]Then shall mine enemies turn back,[t]
This I know, for Jehovah is for me.
[10]In Jehovah will I openly boast,[u]
[11]In Jehovah do I fearlessly trust;
What can man do to me?

Promise of gifts and thank-offerings

[12]Thy vows, O Jehovah, are upon me,
To thee will I render praises,
[13]For from death hast thou delivered me,
Yea, my feet from stumbling,[v]
That I may walk before Jehovah
In the light of the living.

§ 110. The Joy of Complete Trust in Jehovah, Ps. 16

Protestation of loyalty to Jehovah

Ps. 16 [1]Protect me, O God, for I flee to thee.
[2]To Jehovah, I[w] say, 'Thou art my Lord,
For me there is nothing good without thee,[x]
[3]The saints[y] who dwell in the land,
And the noble ones—in them is my delight.
[4]They multiply their sorrows[z] who pursue other gods,[a]
No libations of blood will I pour to them,
Nor will I take their names on my lips.

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p 56[7] Supplying *their*.

q 56[7] Correcting one letter, as the context demands. The Heb. is clearly corrupt and almost unintelligible. Heb. adds, at end of vs., *Jehovah*.

r 56[8] Possibly the Heb. is here corrupt. Briggs freely reconstructs so as to read, *I make known, I recount them, Yahweh*.

s 56[8] A scribe has added the query, *Is it not in thy book?* Evidently he did not understand the strong figure employed by the psalmist.

t 56[9] The Heb. adds *in the day that I call*, but this is apparently a scribal addition.

u 56[10] In the Heb. a scribe has repeated this line, but has used the divine name *Jehovah* instead of *Elohim*, as in the present Heb. text. A comparison with the same refrain in [4] confirms the conclusion that this repetition is due to a later scribe.

v 56[13] Restoring by the aid of the parallel in 116[8].

§ 110 This ps., in all probability, originally recorded the experience and confidence of an individual. Cf. [9, 10]. Persecutors, saints, and apostates are within his range of vision, but he himself enjoys peace and prosperity. He appears to have lived some time in the Persian period, possibly while Nehemiah was governor. The ps. was also adapted for use in voicing the feelings of the restored community.

w 16[2] So VSS. and the clear implication of the context. Heb., *thou hast said*.

x 16[2] This last line is omitted in Gk. The above is based upon a reconstruction of the corrupt Heb. by the aid of Syr., Lat., and Targ. Lit., *my good is not without thee*.

y 16[3] The text is evidently corrupt. The above is based on a slightly corrected Lat. text. The entire vs. may be a later gloss. It certainly is not closely connected with the context. A slight change makes it possible to render the first word *sacred prostitutes*. These are often referred to in connection with the heathen cults of Canaan. One naturally seeks in [3] for the antecedent of *they* in [4]. Originally both vss. may have referred to the heathen apostates with whose rites the psalmist states in [4b] he will have nothing to do.

z 16[4] With Duhm, *Psalmen*, 44, dividing the consonants a little differently. Another of the many possible translations of this vs. is, *they multiply their idols, others praise them*.

a 16[4] *I. e.*, worship the heathen gods.

Jehovah's care for his faithful servants

5 Jehovah, thou art the portion of mine inheritance,[b]
Thou, it is, who maintainest my lot.
6 The lines[c] have fallen for me in pleasant places,
Yea, a fair heritage is mine.
7 I will bless Jehovah who giveth me counsel,
In the night also mine heart[d] instructeth me.
8 Jehovah have I always set before me,
With him at my right hand I shall not be moved.

Assurance of long life and joy

9 So my mind and my heart[e] rejoice,
My flesh also abideth in peace,
10 For thou wilt not forsake me to Sheol,[f]
Nor suffer thy faithful one to see the grave.
11 Thou makedst known to me the pathway of life,
Fullness of joy is in thy presence,
Pleasures in thy right hand forevermore.

§ 111. Assurance That Jehovah Will Deliver Zion, Ps. $102^{12-22, 28, 24-27}$

Jehovah about to rebuild Zion

Ps. 102 12 Thou, Jehovah, art enthroned forever, and thy fame is to all generations.
13 Thou wilt arise, and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to be favorable to her;[g]
14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and have pity upon her dust.
15 And the nations will fear thy[h] name and all the kings of the earth thy majesty,
16 For Jehovah hath built up Zion, he hath appeared in his glory;
17 He hath regarded the prayer of the destitute, and hath not despised their petition.

And restore his people

18 This shall be written for a coming generation, and for a people yet to be created,[i]
19 Because he hath looked down from his holy height,[j] to earth hath he looked,

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[b] 16^{5} Lit., *my part*. The meaning of the vs. is clear. Heb. adds at the end of the line *and my cup*, but this introduces an inconsistent figure and an extra beat.

[c] 16^{6} *I. e.*, the boundary-lines. The reference is evidently to the tradition of the allotment of the land recorded in Josh. 17^{2}. The boundary-lines indicate the territory where the psalmist resides and the lot that has befallen him.

[d] 16^{7} Lit., *reins*, the seat of the emotions and affections.

[e] 16^{9} Lit., *liver*, following a slightly revised Heb. text. The present Heb. reads *honor*, but this is exceedingly awkward, and the similar Heb. word *liver* corresponds to *heart* and designates the organ which the Babylonians as well as the Israelites regarded as the centre of the feelings.

[f] 16^{10} *I. e.*, to go down to death, *Sheol* being the Heb. designation of the abode of the shades.

§ 111 This ps. of faith, written in the five-beat measure, has been injected into a three-beat ps. with which it has no logical connection. Cf. § 163. Vs. ^{28}, which completes ^{22}, was separated by the same disruptive process to which this ps. was subjected. This ps. echoes the hopes of Zech. 1–8 and of II Is. It probably comes from the first half of the Persian period or else from the Maccabean era.

[g] 102^{13} Heb. adds, repeating the thought of the preceding clause, *for the set time to come*.

[h] 102^{15} Heb., *name of Jehovah*, but Jehovah is the one addressed.

[i] 102^{18} Heb. adds *it will praise him*, but this is apparently a scribal expansion which anticipates ^{21}.

[j] 102^{19} Again a scribe has expanded by adding *from heaven Jehovah*.

20To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those condemned to die,
21That they may proclaim Jehovah's name in Zion, his praise in Jerusalem.
22When the peoples are gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve Jehovah,
23The children of thy servants will abide, and their offspring be established before thee.

Jehovah's power to deliver

24Take me not away in the midst of my days; thy years are throughout all generations.
25Of old didst thou lay the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands.
26They will perish, but thou wilt endure; all of them will wear out as a garment,
As a vesture wilt thou change them, and they will be changed;
27But thou, Jehovah,[k] art the same; thy years have no end.

§ 112. Jehovah's Gracious Care, Ps. 23

As the Good Shepherd

Ps. 23 1Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want,
2He maketh me to lie down in grassy meadows,[l]
He leadeth me to the waters of the resting place,
3He continually restoreth my life.

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k 102[27] Supplying the *Jehovah* demanded by the parallelism.

§ 112 This is the most familiar and favorite ps. in the Psalter. Its literary structure is striking: the first stanza has the three-beat measure, the second the four-beat, and the third the emotional five-beat measure. With marvellous feeling and vividness it reflects its picturesque Palestinian background. In the opening stanza the Western translators, in the current versions, have partially obscured the picture. The meadows are the grassy spots along the beds of the wadies where the sheep find the necessary food. The next line describes not quiet streams meandering through the meadows, as the current translation suggests to the Western reader, but the springs, often with pools below, to which the shepherd leads his sheep at noontide or at evening that there they may rest and be refreshed. It was here that not the soul but the vigor or life of the flock was restored. In [4] the old translation, *the valley of the shadow of death*, is not supported by modern Heb. etymology. The reference is rather to the deep, dark wady, through which the passage was especially dangerous because of the wild beasts and other foes lurking in the thickets that skirted the river bed. But in Job 10[21], 38[17] the same Heb. word is used to describe the abode of the dead, so that the current translations are true to the meaning though not to its etymology.

A recent writer (Knight) in *The Song of Our Syrian Guest*, in a brilliant and charming monograph, has maintained that the figure of Jehovah as our shepherd runs through the entire ps. There are great difficulties, however, in accepting this alluring thesis. Each stanza with its different metre is a unit in itself. There are no clear traces of the shepherd figure outside the first stanza, which culminates in the leading of the flock to the grassy meadows and the refreshing waters. In the second stanza Jehovah is the guide of his people. The figure is suggested by the tortuous, intersecting, often dimly traced paths that lead over the hills and through the dark wadies of Palestine. The rod and staff in the last line probably represent the stout stick in the hand of the guide that was used as a defence against wild beats and other foes and a support in walking. Only rarely is the word translated *staff* used in the O.T. to describe the shepherd's crook. The same elements of striking contrast found in the first stanza reappear in the second. On the one side there is the danger of losing the way and of hostile attacks; on the other the serene confidence inspired by the divine guide. In the third stanza the figure is that of the divine host. The characteristic elements of Oriental hospitality all appear: a generously supplied table, the anointing of the head of the guest with oil, the supply of wine, and the consciousness of protection from surrounding foes. It is difficult to conform this verse to the figure of a shepherd, for in Palestine the fold is not the place where provender and water are set before the flock, for those are found in the grassy meadows and at the springs where the sheep pause at noonday and at eventide. The fold is simply the place where the flock sleep through the night. Again in this stanza there is the same sharp contrast between the encircling enemies and the consciousness of perfect security and restfulness under the protection of the divine Host.

The figure of the shepherd is a familiar one in Israel's literature. It first appears in the ancient tribal song of Gen. 49, where Jehovah, [24], is called the Shepherd of Israel. It was expanded by Ezekiel in 34[14, 15], *with good pasture will I* (Jehovah) *feed them, and on the high mountains of Israel will be their pasture; there they shall lie down in a good habitation. . . . I myself will be the shepherd*

l 23[2] Lit., *meadows of grass.*

He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake; The faithful Guide
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of gloom,
I fear no evil, for it is thou who art with me,
Thy rod and thy staff—they, indeed, comfort me.[m]

5 Thou spreadest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, The divine Host
Thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over;[n]
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah for ever and ever.[o]

§ 113. Thanksgiving for Signal Deliverance, Ps. 40¹⁻¹²

Ps. 40 1 I waited patiently for Jehovah and he inclined his ear to me,[p] Deliverance after long waiting
2 He brought me up also out of a desolate pit and from the miry clay,
And he placed my feet upon a rock, he established my steps;
3 And he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
Many are seeing and fearing and putting their trust in Jehovah.

4 Happy is the man who maketh Jehovah his trust, Israel's happiness and gratitude
And respecteth not the proud[q] and those who turn aside to lies.

---

of my flocks, and I will lead them to pasture, is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah. It was a favorite figure with II Isaiah. Cf. Is. 40¹¹ and 49¹⁰. The latter passage was probably in the mind of the psalmist:

> *They* (the returned exiles) *shall not be hungry nor thirsty,*
> *Neither shall the glowing heat nor the sun smite them;*
> *For he who hath pity on them shall lead them,*
> *And to gushing fountains shall he guide them.*

The superscription indicates that the psalm was attributed by the later scribes to David, Israel's shepherd king. The reference in ⁶ to *the house of Jehovah*, however, points clearly to a period when the temple had already been built and when it was the object of that deep adoration which characterized the worshippers who gathered about the second temple. The thought and feeling of the ps. are in a sense timeless, but it voices most clearly the confidence of the Judean community during the middle of the Persian period after Nehemiah's self-sacrificing patriotism had made possible the rebuilding of the walls and a partial restoration of its ancient strength with a resulting sense of security. During the troublesome preceding years Israel had, indeed, known want and passed through a dark, dangerous valley, but now behind its restored walls it felt secure, conscious that Jehovah had again taken up his abode in their holy temple. Even though their enemies pressed them close on every side, they rejoiced in the generous provisions of the divine host. Doubtless the psalmist voices his own personal experiences and gratitude, but the ps. was equally well adapted to expressing the feelings of the members of the Judean community at this bright moment in their history.

[m] 23⁴ *I. e.*, gives me assurance so that I fear no evil.

[n] 23⁵ Or *is exhilarating*. So the early Lat. Fathers.

[o] 23⁶ Lit., *length of days*.

§ 113 While the ultimate basis of this ps. was probably the experience of some individual, it apparently voices the feelings of the Judean community after it had emerged from a period of calamity and danger. Cf. ⁵. It reflects the spirit of the faithful within the Judean community after Nehemiah's work had delivered them from the great perils which threatened from within and without. The sense of enjoying Jehovah's favor, of keeping the law, of confidence in his protection and care is strong. The psalmist was evidently a spiritual disciple of Jeremiah and reveals his intimate acquaintance especially with Jer. 7²¹⁻²³ and 31³¹⁻³⁴. To this ps. has been added a ps. of petition, found in vss. ¹³⁻¹⁷ and again independently in Ps. 70. To join these two pss. together, the editor who blended them has apparently added vs. ¹², which reads:

> *For innumerable evils have encompassed me about;*
> *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me so that I am not able to look up;*
> *They are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me.*

In the ps. itself, however, there is no mention of sin and the prevailing note is altogether trusting and hopeful. The text, especially in vss. ⁶, ⁷, has suffered severely in transmission so that it is impossible satisfactorily to render the original. The ps. as a whole strikes a noble note of faith and confidence in Jehovah.

[p] 40¹ Heb. adds *and heard my cry*.

[q] 40⁴ Gk., Lat., and Syr. read *vanities*, which was the post-exilic equivalent for idols. This rendering may possibly be the more original.

5Many things hast thou done, O Jehovah, my[r] God;
Thy wonderful works and thine intentions for us cannot be set forth;
Should I declare them to thee and speak of them, they are too many to be counted.

Obedience the best expression of gratitude

6In sacrifice and cereal-offering thou dost not delight; thou hast opened mine ears,[s]
Burnt-offerings and sin-offerings thou hast not required; so I said,
7'Behold, I come,[t] for in the roll of the book it is written for me:
8"I delight to do thy pleasure, O my God, and thy law is within me."[u]
9I have proclaimed thy righteousness in the midst of the great congregation.
Behold, I do not refrain my lips, O Jehovah, thou knowest,
10I have not hid thy faithfulness and thy salvation in my breast,
I have declared, I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.
11Thou also, O Jehovah, wilt not withhold from me thy compassion,
Thy kindness and thy faithfulness will keep me safe forever.'

§ 114. Jehovah the One Source of Peace and Strength, Ps. 62

Jehovah the refuge from man's attacks

Ps. 62 1Only wait in silence upon Jehovah,[v]
O my soul,[w] for from him is my hope.
2He only is my rock and my salvation,
My high tower; I shall never be moved.[x]
3How long will ye threaten a man?[y]
Ye shall be slain, all of you,[z]
Like a tottering wall, like a bulging fence!
4They only consult to thrust me out from my[a] dignity.
They take pleasure[b] only in falsehoods;
They bless with their[c] mouth, but inwardly curse.

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[r] 40[5] Certain of the MSS. and the Syr. read *our God*.
[s] 40[6] Lit., *eyes thou hast dug out for me*. The text is doubtful and the meaning obscure. Possibly the psalmist had in mind such passages as Hos. 6[6], Jer. 7[21, 22], and I Sam. 15[22].
[t] 40[7] This is another obscure passage. Possibly in the original the thought is that the psalmist offers himself as a gift to Jehovah rather than the usual sacrificial offering. This line lacks the usual number of feet which prevail in this chapter, and it is very probable that it is a scribal gloss added by some one who had in mind either a copy of the book of Jeremiah or of Micah.
[u] 40[8] An echo of Jer. 31[31-34].
§ 114 The didactic element in this ps. is prominent. Its practical and moral purpose is evident. It is possible that [9-12] embody the reflections of a later sage. The liturgical element and the general atmosphere of the ps. suggest the Gk. period as its date. Possibly the original nucleus, [1-8], comes from the middle of the Persian period. The ps. is peculiar in that its refrain stands at the beginning of the first and second stanzas. It embodies the psalmist's message: God is the refuge of all who trust him. *Selah*, at the end of [4] and [8], marks the end of the first and second stanzas. This is a strong and original ps. It is a meditation in which the psalmist speaks to himself (*O my soul*).
[v] 62[1] A scribe has changed the original *Jehovah* to *Elohim*.
[w] 62[1] So [5]. Heb., *my soul waiteth upon Jehovah*.
[x] 62[2] Heb. adds *greatly*, but it is lacking in the parallel in [6].
[y] 62[3] Evidently here the psalmist addresses his foes while he himself is *the man*.
[z] 62[3] Slightly correcting the Heb.
[a] 62[4] So Gk. Heb., *his*.
[b] 62[4] So Gk. and Syr.
[c] 62[4] So Gk., Syr., and Targ.

Let his people trust him

5 Only wait in silence upon Jehovah,
O my soul, for from him is my hope.
6 He only is my rock and my salvation,
My high tower; I shall never be[d] moved.[e]
7 With Jehovah is my salvation and my glory,
The rock[f] of my strength[g] and my refuge is Jehovah.
8 Trust him at all times, O people,
Pour out your heart before him;
Jehovah is a refuge for us.

Man's finiteness and God's omnipotent justice

9 Only a breath is mankind; a falsehood the sons of men;
When they go up on the balances, they are together lighter than a breath.
10 Trust not in oppression, and be not blinded[h] by robbery;
If riches increase, set not your heart thereon.
11 Once hath Jehovah spoken, twice have I heard this:[i]
That the might is Jehovah's; 12 thine, O Lord, the lovingkindness,
For thou it is that renderest to every man according to his desert.

§ 115. Jehovah the Keeper of His People, Ps. 121

Jehovah the source of help

Ps. 121 1 I lift up mine eyes[j] unto the mountains[k] from whence cometh my help!
2 My help cometh from Jehovah, who made heaven and earth.

His unceasing care

3 He will not suffer thy[l] foot to be moved; he who keepeth thee will not slumber;
4 Behold, he who keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep!

Its potency

5 Jehovah is thy keeper;[m] Jehovah is thy shade upon thy right hand;
6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon[n] by night!

The resulting safety

7 Jehovah will keep thee from all evil; he will preserve thy life;
8 Jehovah will guard thy going out and thy coming in forevermore![o]

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[d] 62⁶ Possibly we should add, with [1], *greatly*.
[e] 62⁶ Certain scholars regard this vs. as secondary.
[f] 62⁷ Or, with one Heb. MS., *my rock*.
[g] 62⁷ Gk. and Syr., *my help*.
[h] 62¹⁰ So five Heb. MSS. Heb., *become not vain*.
[i] 62¹¹ This peculiar form of introduction is intended to render more impressive the statement which follows. Cf. Amos's introductory formula in Am. 1³, ⁶.

§ 115 This exquisite little poem is one of the pss. of ascents and is a companion to 23. It apparently comes from a period of comparative quiet. The Gk. period furnishes a satisfactory background. Like the word of Jesus in Mt. 6²⁵⁻³⁴, this ps. has a message of comfort for all bowed down by fear or affliction. Originally it was a personal ps., but [4] indicates that it was directed to the nation as well. Its monotheism points to a post-exilic period. The prevailing parallelism is stair-like. Apparently it was sung antiphonally. Vss. [1, 2] were chanted by the leader or the people and [3-8] by the chorus.

[j] 121¹ A reminiscence of the days when Jehovah was worshipped on the heights. The mountains in the psalmist's mind are apparently the symbols of the world of nature.
[k] 121¹ Possibly this line is to be read as a question, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the mountains?* to which the answer, *No, Jehovah is Lord of all creation*, is implied.
[l] 121³ Possibly the original read *my* and in the next line *me*.
[m] 121⁵ Gk. and Lat., *will keep thee*.
[n] 121⁶ A survival of the wide-spread primitive belief that the light of the moon was harmful.
[o] 121⁸ Lit., *from this time forth and forevermore*.

§ 116. Confidence in Jehovah's Forgiving Love, Ps. 130

Petition for forgiveness

Ps. 130 [1]Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O Jehovah; [2]hear[p] my voice,
O Lord, let thine ear be attentive to the sound of my supplications.
[3]If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Jehovah,[q] who could stand?
[4]But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be revered.[r]

Assurance that he will fully pardon

[5]I wait for Jehovah,[s] I wait, and in his word do I hope.
[6]My soul waiteth for the Lord more than the watchmen watch for the morning.[t]
[7]Let Israel wait for Jehovah, for with him[u] is lovingkindness and plenteous redemption,[v]
[8]And he it is who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

§ 117. Childlike Trust in Jehovah, Ps. 131

Humility and trust

Ps. 131 [1]Jehovah, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty,[w]
And I do not meddle[x] with great matters, or with things too wonderful for me.
[2]Surely I have stilled and quieted my soul like a weaned child,[y]
As a weaned child resteth on its mother, so is my soul within me.

Didactic refrain

[3]Let Israel hope in Jehovah from this time forth and forevermore.

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§ 116 In this powerful little ps. the notes of petition and trust mingle, but the latter triumphs. Duhm says rightly, "It can hardly be called a penitential psalm." It has, for obvious reasons, occupied a prominent place in the history of the church. Its five-beat measure expresses well its deep emotion. Since it is quoted in II Chr. 6[39, 40] it is probably to be dated early in the Gk. period.

[p] 130[2] Heb. adds *Lord*. It belongs rather with the next line.

[q] 130[3] Again the Heb. adds *Lord*. Many MSS. read, however, *Jah, Jehovah*, indicating that the duplication is due to scribal expansion.

[r] 130[4] Or with Briggs reconstructing the text with the aid of certain Gk. MSS., Syr., and Theod. so as to read *that thy law may be revered*.

[s] 130[5] A scribe has by mistake confused this and the following line so that in the Heb. the phrase *my soul waiteth* is introduced here and the verb is lacking in the next line.

[t] 130[6] A scribe has repeated *for the morning* in the Heb.

[u] 130[7] A scribe has expanded the vs. by adding *with Jehovah*.

[v] 130[7] The *with him* is repeated in the Heb.

§ 117 This beautiful ps. originally described a deep personal experience. The concluding vs. was added to adapt it to use by the community. Soul in this ps. represents the physical passions, the material longings, the selfish motives, which have brought under control and stilled by the poet's higher self, his spiritual ego. Through struggle he has emerged into a state of peace in which he is content to leave all the questions that have baffled him to his divine Father.

[w] 131[1] Lofty eyes were constantly used as a concrete figure for arrogance and pride.

[x] 131[1] Lit., *walk about in, i. e.*, investigate, meddle with.

[y] 131[2] The repetition of weaned child may be due to a scribal error. The figure is clear: even as a weaned child lies quietly on its mother's breast, with no anxiety concerning its nourishment, so at last the psalmist had learned to trust implicitly in Jehovah, assured of his care.

§ 118. Faith Triumphant over Fear and Doubt, Hab. 3

Exordium

Hab. 3 2 I have heard, O Jehovah, thy fame,[a]
I have seen,[a] O Jehovah, thy work;
In the midst of the years declare it,
In the midst of the years make it known,
In wrath remember thy mercy.

Jehovah's advent

3 God cometh from Teman,
And the Holy One from the mountain-land of Paran.
His glory covereth the heavens,
And his splendor filleth the earth.
4 Before him it is like the light,
Rays he hath at his side,[b]
And there is the hiding of his power.[c]
5 Before him Pestilence[d] stalketh.
After him Plague followeth.[e]

Its effect upon the world

6 He standeth, and the earth trembleth,[f]
He looketh, and the nations[g] melt away,[h]
And the mountains of old are scattered,
The everlasting hills bow down.
These be his ways from of old.[i]

His appearance as a warrior

7 The[j] tents of Cushan are affrighted,
The curtains of Midian[k] tremble.

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§ 118 This is one of the most powerful hymns of the O.T. It has also suffered more in translation than any other. The VSS. present a confusing variety of variant readings. The tense in the Heb. also frequently changes so that it is not entirely clear whether the poet is portraying a past or present experience. On the whole the context favors the present tense. The poet uses the language of Dt., II Sam., Is., Mic., and Jer. He evidently has in mind earlier crises, such as that recorded in Judg. 5, when Jehovah was believed to have come from his sacred mountain in the Arabian wilderness southeast of Palestine to deliver his people. It is evident, however, that a later and even greater crisis is on the poet's mental horizon. Such passages as 13-14 find their most perfect counterpart in the earlier persecutions and victories of the Maccabean era although the poem may come from an earlier and lesser crisis. It was probably given the title, *The Prayer of Habakkuk the Prophet*, and appended to the writings of that pre-exilic prophet because he was the first to present the problem of doubt and the solution of faith, 2¹⁻⁴, which are central in the ps. The rest of the superscription, which may be translated with the aid of the Gk., *On the stringed instruments*, and the postscript, *To the musical director. On the stringed instruments*, indicate that it was interpreted as a collective ps. and was used and probably originally written for use in the temple service.

[a] 3² Lit., *report of thee.*

[a] 3² Slightly correcting the Heb., as the context requires. The scribe has here mistaken the word *see* for the very similar Heb. word meaning *fear*.

[b] 3⁴ Revising with Ward (*Hab.*, 26) the corrupt and impossible Heb.

[c] 3⁴ This line is very doubtful. The VSS. differ. Gk., *he maketh*, lit., *putteth*.

[d] 3⁵ Lit., *flame*. It is a poetic designation of the plague which spread like a flame, consuming its victims.

[e] 3⁵ Lit., *goeth forth at his feet.*

[f] 3⁶ Following the Gk. and context in translating the Heb.

[g] 3⁶ Possibly Duhm is right in emending so as to read *rocks;* for this is more consistent with the context.

[h] 3⁶ So Gk. supported by context.

[i] 3⁶ Lit., *the ways of old to him.* Many commentators regard this line as secondary. The VSS. differ widely.

[j] 3⁷ Correcting the Heb. with the aid of the context. A scribe had added *I saw*.

[k] 3⁷ Lit., *land of Midian*. This is the poetic way of picturing the effect of Jehovah's advance through the Arabian wilderness where dwelt the Cushites and Midianites.

[8]Art thou[l] wroth, O Jehovah, with the mountains?[m]
Is thine anger against the rivers,
Or thine indignation against the sea,
That thou dost ride upon thy horses,
That thou mountest thy chariots of victory,[n]
[9]That thy bow standeth out uncovered,
That thy quiver is filled[o] with shafts?[p]

His achievements in behalf of his people

Thou cleavest the earth with torrents,
[10]The mountains see thee and writhe,[q]
The tempest of waters sweepeth by,
The great deep uttereth its voice,
The height lifteth up its hands,
[11]The sun[r] standeth still in his dwelling,
For light thine arrows go forth,
For brightness, the glittering of thy spear.
[12]In rage thou stridest over the earth,
In wrath thou tramplest the nations.
[13]Thou goest forth to help thy people,
Thou advancest[s] to help thine anointed ones.
Thou crushest the head of the wicked,[t]
Laying bare the foundation to the neck.
[14]Thou piercest his head with his spears,
As his champions[u] storm out to scatter me,
As they rejoice to devour the poor secretly.
[15]Thou treadest the sea with thy horses,
While the mighty waters roar.[v]

Effect upon his faithful servant

[16]I have heard, and my body trembleth,
My lips do quiver at the sound,
Rottenness entereth my bones,
Beneath me my legs[w] tremble.

---

[l] 3[8] So Gk.

[m] 3[8] With G. A. Smith (*Bk. of Twelve*, II, 155), correcting the Heb., which has *rivers* (repeated in the next line), and substituting the very similar Heb. word *mountains* demanded by [6].

[n] 3[8] *I. e.*, the clouds. The verb implied has been supplied in the translation.

[o] 3[9] Correcting the corrupt Heb. by the aid of certain Gk. texts that are rather strongly supported by the context.

[p] 3[9] The *selah* suggests that here a new stanza begins.

[q] 3[10] Ps. 77[16] contains an echo of this vs., but the variations are too wide to justify its use in reconstructing radically the present text, as do Duhm and Ward.

[r] 3[11] The Heb. adds *moon*, but it is evidently a scribal gloss appended by one who had in mind Josh. 10[12, 13], for the *and* is lacking and the pronominal suffix at the end of the line is singular and its gender does not agree with that of the Heb. word for moon.

[s] 3[13] Supplying the verb implied by the context and required to complete the measure.

[t] 3[13] The Heb. in the latter part of the vs. is almost hopelessly corrupt. The above reading is based on certain Gk. MSS. Heb. adds *out of the house of the*.

[u] 3[14] Dividing the vs. as the metre and parallelism demand. The meaning of the rare word translated *champions* is doubtful.

[v] 3[15] The position and interpretation of this vs. are doubtful. Some commentators place it after [8] and others after [11]. In any case the Heb. word translated *heap* or *surge* is best regarded as a verb (so Gk.) and translated as in Ps. 46[3].

[w] 3[16] Slightly emending the Heb., as the Gk. and context suggests, so that it reads, lit., *steps*.

The triumph of faith

But I will wait quietly for the day of trouble,[x]
For the approach of the people who attack us;
17 For though the fig tree beareth no fruit,[y]
And there be no vintage on the vines,
Though the olive harvest fail,
And the fields yield no food,
Though the flock be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls,
18 Yet I will exult in Jehovah,
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.
19 The Lord Jehovah is my strength!
And he maketh my feet like the hinds',
And will make me to walk on my high places!

---

x 3[16] Many commentators revise so as to read, *I moan in view of the day of trouble*, but the VSS. support the Heb. and it is simpler to regard this line as marking the transition from fear to faith.
y 3[17] So Gk. Heb., *blossom*, but this is apparently due to the scribal misreading of one letter.

PRAYERS

I. PETITIONS FOR DELIVERANCE FROM CRUEL, REMORSELESS FOES

Pss. 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 22, 69, $31^{1-8,\ 9-24}$, 54, 55, $57^{1-4,\ 6}$, 64, 25, 28, 40^{13-17} (70), 71, 120, 140–144^{11}

II. PETITIONS FOR DELIVERANCE FROM HEATHEN OPPRESSORS

Pss. 44, 59, 60, 74, 79, 80

III. IMPRECATORY PSALMS

Pss. 35, 58, 109, 129, 83, 137

IV. PETITIONS FOR VINDICATION AND RESTORATION

Pss. 26, 27^{7-12}, 41, 67, 122, 86, 88, $102^{1-11,\ 23-27}$, 123

V. PRAYERS FOR JEHOVAH'S FORGIVENESS AND FAVOR

Pss. 38, 51, 85, 39, 90

PRAYERS

I

PETITIONS FOR DELIVERANCE FROM CRUEL, REMORSELESS FOES

Pss. 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 22, 69, 31[1-8, 9-24], 54, 55, 57[1-4, 6], 64, 25, 28, 40[13-17] (70), 71, 120, 140–144[11]

§ 119. A Morning Prayer for Guidance, Ps. 5

Invocation of Jehovah

Ps. 5 [1]Give ear to my words, O Jehovah, consider my murmuring;[a]
[2]O listen to my cry for help, my king and my God;
For to thee I pray [3]in the morning,[b] thou hearest my voice;
In the morning I make ready for thee and ever keep watch.[c]

Evil, pride, and deceit are abhorrent to thee

[4]Verily thou art not a God who delightest in wickedness,
[5]Evil cannot abide with thee, boasters dare not stand before thine eyes,[d]
Thou dost hate all evil-doers, [6]all those who speak lies;[e]
Men who are bloody and deceitful thou abhorrest,[f] O Jehovah.

Guide and protect thy humble worshippers

[7]But as for me, through thy great goodness, I enter thy house,
Facing thy holy temple I reverently worship thee.
[8]O Jehovah, in thy righteousness guide me because of those lying in wait for me;
Before me make straight[g] thy way.[h]

---

§ 119 This ps. bears the superscription, *For the musical director. For flute playing. Psalm of David.* The ps. expresses the devotion and voices the needs of the righteous worshippers at the temple. The spirit is that of post-exilic Judaism. The treacherous, flattering foes are within not without the community. Their attitude toward religion is clearly expressed in Mal. 2[17] and their character is laid bare in Is. 56[9-12]. The psalmist speaks for those who fear Jehovah and faithfully cherish the good and abhor the evil. The date as in Pss. 3, 4 is apparently the Persian period before the advent of Nehemiah. The setting of the ps. is the temple, and it was well adapted for use as a morning prayer.

The emotional five-beat measure prevails and appropriately voices the psalmist's impassioned cry for deliverance and vindication. The ps. consists of five four-line strophes. The first is the invocation; then in the succeeding strophes the wicked and righteous are in turn contrasted, so that the strophic rhythm is in reality antithetic with a corresponding strong dramatic effect.

[a] 5[1] Lit., *faint utterance.* RV, *meditation;* but this does not reproduce the Heb. Cf. [c].

[b] 5[3] The Heb. inserts *Jehovah* between the verb and its modifying clause. It is probably one of the common scribal additions.

[c] 5[3] Probably the language was suggested by the custom of preparing the morning offering for Jehovah, cf. Lev. 1[7, 12], 24[8], and then of watching to see whether or not it was accepted.

[d] 5[5] The technical term for appearing at the temple for worship.

[e] 5[6] The Heb. adds *thou dost destroy*, but this not only destroys the metre but is inappropriate between the main verbs *hate* and *abhor*.

[f] 5[6] Slightly correcting the Heb.

[g] 5[8] So Heb. and most of the VSS. Gk., *my way before thee.*

[h] 5[8] This line has but three beats in the Heb. It has probably lost two words.

Overthrow the godless

9 For in their mouth is nothing right, in their heart is ruin;
Their throat is an open grave, with their tongue they flatter.[i]
10 Declare them guilty, O God, let them fall by their own plots;
Thrust them out because of their many crimes, for they defy thee.

Vindicate and bless thy righteous servants

11 But let all who seek refuge in thee rejoice forever, and joyously shout for joy,
Let all who love thy name exult in thee;
12 For it is thou, O Jehovah, who blessest the man who doeth right;
Thou coverest him[j] over as with a shield, with favor crownest him.

§ 120. Cry for Help in Mortal Distress and Its Answer, Ps. 6

Pity, O Jehovah, and heal

Ps. 6 1 O Jehovah, rebuke me not in thine anger,
Do not in thy rage chastise me.
2 O Jehovah, be gracious to me, for I am weak,
Heal me,[k] for my strength is broken,[l]
3 And I am exceedingly dismayed.[m]

Save from death

But thou, O Jehovah,—how long?
4 O turn,[n] save my life,
Deliver me for thy goodness' sake;
5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee;[o]
In Sheol who can give thee praise?

Wasting sorrow because of evil foes

6 I am weary with my groaning;
Every night I drench my bed,
With my tears I water my couch.
7 Mine eye is sunken with grief,
It has grown old because of all my foes.

Glad assurance of divine deliverance

8 Depart from me all ye evil-doers,
For Jehovah hath heard my weeping,

---

[i] 5⁹ Lit., *they are smooth of tongue.*

[j] 5¹² Following Briggs (*Pss.*, I, 45) in transferring the clause *thou coverest him*, which does not fit this context, to the next vs., where it is demanded by the sense as well as the metrical structure of the vs.

§ 120 This ps. is introduced by the superscription, *To the musical director. With strong music. With the bass voice. Psalm of David.* Again the psalmist voices the emotions of the afflicted but truly religious members of the community. The foes are the godless Israelites who oppress the pious. The latter are so deeply afflicted that death threatens, [4, 5]. The sense of guilt also oppresses, and sorrow overwhelms them, but, like a flash of light in the midst of gloom, the assurance comes, [8-10], that Jehovah has heard their prayer and will deliver them from their foes. The obvious dependence upon Jer. and Is. 38, cf. Jer. 10[24] and Is. 38[18], and the quotations from it in subsequent pss. support the other evidence that it comes from the middle of the Persian period.

The three-beat measure is used. With the exception of the last stanza, which has six lines, the ps. consists of four five-line strophes. The first three strophes stand in the synon. relation to each other; but the fourth records the answer to the psalmist's petition.

[k] 6² So Gk. In the Heb. a scribe has added *Jehovah.*

[l] 6² Lit., *my bones are trembling.*

[m] 6³ The same verb is used as in the preceding line, but the English idiom calls for a different synonym.

[n] 6⁴ Again *Jehovah* has been inserted in the Heb. by a scribe, destroying the metre.

[o] 6⁵ The Heb. word means either (1) remembrance of Jehovah in the ritual, or (2) remembrance of people or things, or (3) memorial of a person. The parallelism favors the first meaning. Cf. Is. 38[18, 19].

9 Jehovah hath heard my supplication,
Jehovah accepteth my prayer;
10 All my foes[p] shall be greatly dismayed,
They will suddenly turn back in disgrace.[q]

§ 121. Prayer for Deliverance and Justice, Ps. 7

Cry for protection

Ps. 7 1 Jehovah, my God, with thee do I seek refuge;
Save and deliver me from all my pursuers;
2 Lest, like a lion, they tear me[r] asunder,
With none[s] to rescue and none to deliver.

Profession of innocence

3 O Jehovah, my God, if I have done this[t] thing,
If perchance on my hands there be any injustice,
4 If I have requited with evil him[u] who was at peace with me,
And oppressed[v] him who is without cause mine enemy,
5 Then let the foe seek my life and take it,[w]
And let him tread my life-blood into the ground,
And let him lay mine honor[x] low in the dust.

Plea to have Jehovah rise in judgment

6 Arise in thine anger, O Jehovah;
Lift thyself up against the fury[y] of my enemies.
Rouse thyself[z] for the judgment thou hast appointed;
7 Let the assembly of the peoples encircle thee,
On high above them sit enthroned,[a]
8 O Jehovah, who judgest the nations!

To vindicate his righteous servants

Judge me, O Jehovah, according to my righteousness and mine integrity.
9 Let the evil of the wicked come to an end; but establish the righteous;
A trier of hearts[b] and hidden motives is the righteous God.
10 My defence is with God,[c] who saveth the upright in heart;
11 God is a righteous judge, a God daily filled with indignation.[d]

---

[p] 6[10] Omitting the first *they will be disgraced*, which has evidently been introduced into the first part of the vs. through a scribal repetition.

[q] 6[10] Lit., *they shall turn back, they shall be put to shame in a moment.*

§ 121 This ps. is introduced by the title, *Shiggaion* (perhaps an impassioned ode. Cf. Hab. 3[1, 19], Gk.). *Psalm of David, which he sang to Jehovah because of the words of Cush, the Benjamite.* No such person as Cush is referred to elsewhere in the O.T. The contents as well as the title of this ps. are unique. Vss. [1-5, 12-16] appear to refer to a certain definite experience in the life of an individual. The fortunes of David during his outlaw period, I Sam. 23–27, and the ultimate fate that overtook Saul, his pursuer, would seem to be in the mind of the poet, who probably lived about the middle of the Persian period. According to certain critics, vss. [1-6, 12-16] represent the original literary unit, but the reasons given are not conclusive.

[r] 7[2] Lit., *my soul.*

[s] 7[2] Following the Gk. and Syr., which supplies the *none* demanded by the context and metre.

[t] 7[3] The *this* evidently refers to the crime charged against the speaker by the pursuing foe. The next vs. implies that the charge was the breaking of a covenant.

[u] 7[4] Gk., *requited him who hath done evil to me.*

[v] 7[4] So Syr. and Targ. and parallelism. Heb., *delivered him.* Ewald conjectured that two lines had here been lost.

[w] 7[5] Lit., *pursue my soul and overtake.*

[x] 7[5] Or *liver*, representing the seat of the feelings.

[y] 7[6] Or *in fury against.*

[z] 7[6] Heb. adds *for me;* so Old Lat. Gk., *Jehovah my God.*

[a] 7[7] Slightly revising the Heb.

[b] 7[9] Lit., *reins*, the innermost parts of man.

[c] 7[10] Lit., *shield.*

[d] 7[11] Gk., *strong and patient.*

Malignity and fate of the wicked

12 Surely he is again whetting his sword,
His bow he hath bent and hath made it ready,
13 And he hath prepared his weapons of death,
His arrows he maketh into fiery shafts,[e]
14 Behold, he giveth breath to iniquity,[f]
He conceiveth mischief and bringeth forth deception;
15 He hath dug and hollowed out a pit,
But he will fall into the hole that he is making;
16 Upon his own head shall his mischief come back,
On his own pate shall his violence recoil.

Doxology

17 I give thanks to Jehovah for his righteousness,
And sing praises to the name of Jehovah the Most High.[g]

§ 122. Prayer That Jehovah Will Vindicate His Justice by Punishing the Wicked, Ps. 10

The defiant and yet unpunished crime of the wicked

Ps. 10 1 Why, O Jehovah, dost thou stand afar off,
Hiding thyself in times of distress?
2 The wicked are arrogantly persecuting the afflicted,
Let them be caught by the plots they devise.
3 For the wicked boasteth to his heart's desire,
And the greedy curseth[h] and spurneth Jehovah.
4 In his pride the wicked saith,[i] 'He doth not punish;'
'There is no God,' is ever his thought.
5 His ways are corrupt at all times,
Thine acts of judgment are far above, out of his sight,
He laugheth[j] in scorn at all his adversaries;
6 He thinketh to himself, 'I cannot be moved;
For all time to come I will not fall into misfortune.'
7 His mouth is full of cursing[k] and fraud,[l]
Under his tongue is sorrow and mischief.
8 He stayeth in the lurking-places about the villages,[m]
In secret places he slayeth the innocent,
His eyes spy out the unfortunate, to slay them.[n]

---

[e] 7[13] *I. e., firebrand*, following the Gk. and Syr. and the context.
[f] 7[14] Evidently this is used metaphorically for the wicked man.
[g] 7[17] This closing doxology is probably a liturgical addition.
§ 122 An editor, if not the original author, combined Pss. 9 and 10 into an acrostic ps. This explains the absence of a superscription in the Heb. to 10. The Gk., however, divides them, and this division is based on the fundamental fact that the two pss. deal with two distinctly different subjects. In Ps. 10 the acrostic arrangement is only dimly visible. It is a vivid description of the proud, malignant persecutors of the pious in the Jewish community in the days preceding Nehemiah's appearance.
[h] 10[3] Lit., *bless;* in several passages it is equivalent to *curse*.
[i] 10[4] Following the Gk. and Syr. and a corrected Heb. text.
[j] 10[5] Lit., *puffs*.
[k] 10[7] Transferring the first word of the Heb. to its original position demanded by the context, the Heb., and the acrostic structure.
[l] 10[7] The Heb. adds *in oppression*.
[m] 10[8] Lit., *lurking-place of the villages or settlements*, i. e., the places on the outskirts of the outlying hamlets from which attacks were made.
[n] 10[8] So Gk. and Lat. Heb. is evidently corrupt.

9 He lieth in ambush like a lion in a thicket,
He lieth in wait to catch the afflicted,
He catcheth the afflicted by drawing him into his net;
10 He watcheth,[o] he lieth in wait, he croucheth,
And unfortunate[p] are they who fall into his clutches.[q]
11 He saith to himself, 'God hath forgotten,
He hath hidden his face, he never seeth.'

Prayer that Jehovah may vindicate the right

12 Arise, O Jehovah,[r] lift up thy hand,
O God, never forget the afflicted.
13 Why doth the wicked contemn God,
And think to himself, 'Thou wilt not punish'?[s]
14 Thou hast seen, even thou,[t] the trouble and grief,
Thou givest heed to requite with thine hand,
To thee the unfortunate leaveth his cause;
Of the orphan thou art, indeed, the helper.
15 Break the arm of the evil and wicked,[u]
Let his wickedness be sought out until none can be found.[v]

Triumph of faith

16 Jehovah is king forever and ever!
Out of his land the heathen have vanished.[w]
17 Thou hast heard, O Jehovah, the desire of the afflicted,
Thou settest thy[x] mind upon them, thou art attentive,
18 To give justice to the orphan and the oppressed,
No more to make earth-born[y] man tremble.

§ 123. Prayer for Deliverance from Deceitful Oppressors, Ps. 12

The lack of sincerity

Ps. 12 1 Save, O Jehovah, for goodness[z] is no more,
For fidelity hath vanished[a] from the sons of men;

---

[o] 10[10] Restoring the verb suggested by the acrostic structure of the ps. and the demands of the Heb. and metre. Cf. also Ps. 37[32].

[p] 10[10] Following the marginal reading of the Heb.

[q] 10[11] Or *power*. The meaning of the Heb. word is not certain.

[r] 10[12] The Heb. adds *God;* but this makes an unusually long line and appears to have been transferred through some scribal error from the next line where it completes the parallelism and metre.

[s] 10[13] Lit., *seek*.

[t] 10[14] Jehovah is the one addressed.

[u] 10[15] Following the order of the Gk. and Lat.

[v] 10[15] The exact translation is doubtful; possibly it should be rendered, *if one seeks his wickedness, he shall not find*.

[w] 10[16] Lit., *perished*.

[x] 10[17] Slightly correcting the text so as to read *thy* instead of *their*.

[y] 10[18] So Gk. Heb., *from the earth*. The original form of this vs. is doubtful. Some read *to make earth-born man ever tremble*.

§ 123 This ps. is introduced by the superscription, *For the musical director*. *For the bass voice. Psalm of David*. The psalmist expresses the feeling of the faithful in the community who are suffering at the hands of the arrogant, deceitful leaders. His language is that of the post-exilic writers, and he is acquainted with the late passages in Is. Cf. [5] and Is. 33[10]. The ps. probably comes from the dark days immediately preceding the advent of Nehemiah.

The four-beat measure is used with great regularity. Also the original ps. appears to have contained four regular stanzas of four lines each. It opens with a cry for help and a lament over the prevailing insincerity, but in succeeding stanzas faith in Jehovah gains the ascendancy and, as in so many of the pss., the poet realizes that his prayer is answered.

[z] 12[1] Slightly correcting the pointing of the Heb. as the context demands.

[a] 12[1] Lit., *have come to an end*.

[2]They speak empty lies each man to his neighbor,
With flattering lip, with double mind they speak.

O Lord, put away deceit and falsehood

[3]May Jehovah cut off every flattering lip,
And tongue that speaks words that are boastful,
[4]Of those who say, 'To our tongues we give weight;
Our lips are our own; who is lord over us?'

Jehovah's quick deliverance

[5]'Because of the spoiling of the afflicted and the sighing of the poor
Now will I arise,' saith Jehovah;
'I will set him in safety, I will breathe upon him.'[b]
[6]The speech of Jehovah is speech that is pure.[c]

Faith triumphant

When thrust down to earth, [7]thou, O Jehovah, wilt preserve him,
Thou wilt keep him forever from this generation.
[8]Even though the wicked strut about on every side,
When thou arisest, then dost thou lightly esteem[d] the sons of men.

§ 124. Petition for God's Help in Affliction, Ps. 13

O Lord, how long?

Ps. 13 [1]How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou continue to forget me?[e]
How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
[2]How long must I cherish grief[f] in my soul,
With sorrow in my heart day and night?[g]
How long shall my foe triumph over me?

Save me from mortal danger

[3]Regard me, answer me, O Jehovah, my God,[h]
Lest I sleep in death, oh make bright mine eyes,[i]
[4]Lest my foe then say, 'I have prevailed over him,'
Lest mine adversaries exult because I am moved.[j]

Assurance of God's answer

[5]But I, indeed, trust in thy goodness,
My heart rejoiceth in thy help,[k]

---

[b] 12^5 The meaning is doubtful. It may be translated *in the safety for which he longs.*

[c] 12^6 Again the Heb. is difficult. The phrases *Refined silver,—seven times purified* are apparently additions by a scribe acquainted with 18^{30}, 19^{8-10}.

[d] 12^8 This clause is doubtful. Gk., *Thou wast very angry with.*

§ 124 This ps. has the simple superscription, *For the chief musician. Psalm of David.* The tone is distinctly individual, although the psalmist also doubtless voices the painful experience of many deeply afflicted souls who, like himself, were persecuted to the point of despair by their powerful, pitiless foes. Vs. [4] indicates that he is one of the pious who feel that Jehovah's honor would be endangered by their ultimate downfall. The ps. as a whole expresses the invincible faith of the true lovers of Jehovah, whose prayers constitute the basis of the Psalter. Its date is to be found in the discouraging years immediately before Nehemiah's advent.

The ps. in its final form consists of three stanzas. The first two are in the four-beat measure and stand in antithetic relation to the third stanza in which faith proclaims its victory in the quicker, prevailingly three-beat measure.

[e] 13^1 Lit., *ever forget me.*

[f] 13^2 Following a text revised as the context suggests. Heb., *counsels.*

[g] 13^2 So Gk. and Syr. Heb. omits *and night*, but this addition is supported by the metrical structure of the vs. and the implications of the context.

[h] 13^3 This line is the antithesis of [1b].

[i] 13^3 As in I Sam. $14^{27, 29}$, this idiom evidently means *refresh, receive physical vigor.* It is a common figure in the pss. Cf. 4^6, 31^{16}.

[j] 13^4 *I. e., tottering to my ruin.*

[k] 13^5 The Gk. and Lat. add, *Yea, I will praise the name of the Lord Most High.*

6Praises I will sing to Jehovah,
Because he hath dealt liberally with me.

§ 125. Prayer That God Intervene for the Righteous, Ps. 17

Protestation of innocence

Ps. 17 1Hearken, O Jehovah, to the right;[l] attend to my cry;
Listen to my prayer from lips that are free from guile.
2Let my judgment come forth from thy presence, that mine[m] eyes may behold it.
With equity[n] 3thou hast proved my heart, thou hast searched me by night,
Thou hast tested[o] me and not found me thinking evil nor my mouth uttering it,[p]
4By the word[q] of thy mouth I have kept myself from the way of the violent;
5My steps follow close in thy tracks, my footsteps slip not.

Prayer for divine deliverance and protection

6I call upon thee, O God, for thou wilt answer me.
Incline to me thine ear, hear my speech,
7Reveal[r] thy marvellous kindness, thou helper of those seeking refuge,
From assailants in thy right hand 8keep me as the pupil[s] of thine eye.
Hide me in the shadow of thy wings 9from the presence of the wicked;
Those, my foes, who assail me, quickly encircle me.

Treachery of the wicked

10They shut themselves up in their own fat,[t] with their mouth they speak insolently,
11They advance in hostile array[u] against me, now they surround me,
They take aim with their eyes in order to strike me to earth;[v]
12They come suddenly upon me[w] as a lion, they are greedy for prey,
They are like a young lion lurking in ambush.

May they be punished

13Arise, O Jehovah, confront them,[x] cast them down,
O deliver my life with thy sword from the power of the wicked,[y]
14May they be slain by thy hand, slain for eternity,

---

§ 125 The author of this ps. was a protagonist of the pious. His assailants are the same class who figure in the immediately preceding pss. Like those pss., 17 is from the middle of the Persian period. It presents, however, a high ideal of piety and emphasizes purity of heart and utterance rather than ceremonial piety.

[l] 17[1] Lit., *righteousness*, possibly it stands for *righteous man*.

[m] 17[2] So Gk. Heb., *thine*.

[n] 17[3] The Heb. joins this word to the preceding line, but the parallelism and the metre favor the above division.

[o] 17[3] *I. e., as in a furnace.*

[p] 17[4] Slightly correcting the Heb.

[q] 17 Here again the text is corrupt and the reconstruction is doubtful. The clause *as to the deeds of men*, at the beginning, has no connection with the context.

[r] 17[7] Lit., *make wonderful*.

[s] 17[8] Cf. Dt. 32[10], Lam. 2[18].

[t] 17[10] Especially the midriff. The meaning is that they are irresponsive to all feelings of pity.

[u] 17[11] Correcting the evidently corrupt Heb. according to suggestions furnished by the VSS. and supported by the context. The vs. is difficult and doubtful.

[v] 17[11] Lit., *they put their eyes to stretch out in the earth.*

[w] 17[12] Following the Gk. The Heb. is clearly corrupt. The above translation is also strongly supported by the context. Another possible rendering of the Heb. is *they are like*.

[x] 17[13] Heb. has sing. throughout this vs.

[y] 17[13] Heb., *from the wicked*.

Let their portion be during life, and fill them[a] with what thou hast stored up for them,[a]
May their sons be sated, and may they leave the residue to their offspring.

Epilogue

15 But I, in my righteousness, shall behold thy face,
I shall be satisfied when I awake beholding[b] thy form.

§ 126. The Cry of the Supreme Sufferer, Ps. 22[1-26]

Seemingly forsaken by God

Ps. 22 1 My God,[c] why hast thou forsaken me?
Why so far from my crying?[d]
2 By day I call, but thou answerest not,
And by night there is no rest for me.

Yet in the past God never forsook his people

3 Yet thou, O my God,[e] art the Holy One,
Enthroned on Israel's songs of praise.
4 In thee our fathers trusted,
They trusted, and thou didst deliver them;
5 To thee they cried, and they escaped;
In thee they trusted and were not ashamed.

Despised by the people

6 But I indeed am a worm and no man,[f]
Reproached by men[g] and despised by the people.

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[a] 17[14] Lit., *their belly*.
[a] 17[14] *I. e.*, of judgment.
[b] 17[15] With RV supplying the verb *beholding*. Possibly this last vs. is a later addition.

§ 126 Ps. 22 is one of the most quoted pss. of the Psalter. It also quotes largely from earlier O.T. writings. Cobb, in *Bk. of Pss.*, pp. 59–61, has indicated in parallel columns this close relationship. The majority of the quotations in the ps. are from Jer., Ezek., Lam., Job, and especially II Is. Here the servant of Jehovah speaks, as in Is. 42–53. He is, however, not the idealized servant but the exiled race, *the worm, reproached by men and despised by the people*, [6], of Is. 41[14], 49[7], and 53[3]. Here the feelings of the Jewish race are laid bare in its hour of mortal anguish. Its memories, its doubts, its pains, and its hopes are set forth with a frankness and dramatic power that have arrested the attention of generations of readers. As in Is. 53, the portrait is individual and the woes of the sufferer are portrayed in superlative colors. Cf. [12-18]. But the experiences here reflected are too varied to fit any one individual. Rather they picture collectively the woes that came to the community and especially to the faithful.

The date and background of the ps. are clearly the same as in Is. 40–55 and the poem of Job. It is the period of bitter persecution that followed the rebuilding of the second temple (516 B.C.) and the disappointment of the popular hopes of attaining independence under Zerubbabel. Heathen neighbors attacked the helpless Judean community, while within the cruel, rapacious leaders preyed upon those who remained faithful to Jehovah, seizing their lands, forcing their children into slavery, cf. Neh. 5, and taunting them because of their piety. The original prayer apparently ended with the petition in [20, 21] for divine deliverance. To this is appended a doxology, [22-26], in which the sufferer declares that his prayer has been answered. This appendix was evidently written in the light of the deliverance wrought by Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and in correcting the social evils. A second appendix, in the five-beat measure, [27-31], proclaims Jehovah's universal rule and voices the hope that the time was coming when all nations would worship him. This was probably suggested by Is. 52[13]–53[12] and added in the Gk. period. These appendices indicate how deep was the impression that the original ps. made upon later readers. It is not strange that the early Christian writers, searching the Scriptures for references to the work of Jesus, regarded this ps. as a detailed prediction of his shame and sufferings on the cross.

[c] 22[1] This line is quoted in Mt. 27[46], Mk. 15[34]. The repetition of *my God* in the Heb. is probably due to a later scribe.

[d] 22[1] Heb., *words of my roaring* (in anguish). The metre, the context, and the allusion in [24] favor the shorter text followed above. The meaning appears to be that there is no sign of approaching deliverance in response to his cries of pain. Duhm (*Psalmen*, 48), by a radical revision of the text, secures a more harmonious reading: *Thou remainest afar, O my help, the object of my cry, my God*.

[e] 22[3] Transposing *my God* from the beginning of [2] to [3] where the metre and context require it.

[f] 22[6] Cf. Is. 41[14], 53[3], 49[7].

[g] 22[6] Lit., *a reproach of mankind*.

7 Whoever seeth me derideth me,
They sneer[h] as they toss the head:
8 'He depended upon[i] Jehovah, let him deliver him,
Let him rescue him, for in him he delighteth!'

Yet God's care has been from the first

9 Yet it was thou who took me from the womb,
Who made me safe on my mother's breast;
10 On thee I was cast from birth,[j]
Thou art my God from my mother's womb.
11 Be not far from me, for there is distress,[k]
Draw nigh, for there is no helper.

The prey of malicious foes

12 Many bulls encircle me about,
Mighty ones of Bashan beset[l] me,
13 They open their mouths at me,
Like a ravening, roaring lion.
14 As water am I poured out,
Yea, all of my bones are out of joint,
My heart hath become like wax,
It is melted within my body;[m]
15 My palate[n] is dried up like a potsherd,
And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws.
17a I can count all my bones,[o]
15c In the dust of death thou dost lay me.
16 For dogs[p] encircle me about,
A gang of evil-doers enclose me;
They fetter[q] my hands and feet,
17b They stare, they gloat over me;
18 They divide my garments among them,
And for my clothing they cast lots among themselves.

Appeal to God to save

19 But thou, O Jehovah, be not far off;
O my strength, haste to my help;
20 Deliver my life from the sword,
My one possession[r] from the power of the dogs.
21 Save me from the mouth of the lion,
In my affliction[s] from the horns of the wild ox.

---

[h] 22[7] Lit., *separate with the lip*. If the text is correct it refers to the curling lip of scorn.

[i] 22[8] Lit., *he rolled, i. e., his cares*. So Gk. and Lat. and a different vocalization of the Heb. This is strongly supported by the context.

[j] 22[10] Lit., *womb*. The reference in [9, 10] is probably to the Semitic custom by which at birth the father acknowledged and preserved the life of the child by taking it on his knee.

[k] 22[11] Dividing this vs. as the balanced parallelism and the regular metre demand.

[l] 22[12] The Heb. verb conveys the idea of waiting expectantly.

[m] 22[14] Lit., *inwards*.

[n] 22[15] Correcting a scribal error in the Heb. as the context demands.

[o] 22[17a] Transferring this line as the context and poetic structure of the passage demand.

[p] 22[16] Cf. Is. 56[10] for the same contemptuous designation of the vicious Jewish rulers.

[q] 22[16] Or *mar*. Gk. and current translation, *dig through, pierce*. The meaning of the Heb. verb is doubtful. Aquila and Sym. favor the reading *bind* or *fetter*, which better suits the context.

[r] 22[20] Lit., *my only one*. Cf. [21] and 35[16]. *I. e., my life*.

[s] 22[21] The present Heb. text reads *thou hast answered me;* but the Gk., Sym., and Lat. suggest that this is a scribal error for the very similar Heb., *my affliction*.

A later doxology

[22]I will declare thy name to my countrymen,
And praise thee in the midst of the congregation.
[23]Oh, ye who fear Jehovah, praise him,
All the seed of Jacob, honor him,
All the offspring of Israel stand in awe of him;
[24]For he hath[t] not abhorred the affliction[u] of the afflicted,
And he hath not hidden his face from me,[v]
When I cried unto him he heard.
[25]Of thee is my praise in the congregation,
In the presence of those who fear him I will pay my vows.
[26]The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek him shall give him praise,
[Saying], 'Let your heart live forever.'

§ 127. A Cry for Deliverance from Impious Persecutors, Ps. 69

Save, O God

Ps. 69 [1]Save me, O Jehovah, for the waters are come to me;
[2]I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing;
I am come into deep waters, and a flood floweth over me.

Reasons why God should intercede

[3]I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched;
Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.
[4]Those hating me without cause are more than the hairs of my head;[w]
My false enemies, who would cut me off, are mighty;
That which I took not away[x] I must restore.
[5]O Jehovah, thou, indeed, knowest my foolishness;[y]
And my faults are not hid from thee.
[6]Let not those who wait for thee, O Jehovah[z] of hosts, be put to shame through me,
Let not those that seek thee, O God of Israel, be dishonored through me;

The injustice done to his faithful servant

[7]Because for thy sake I have borne reproach;
Insult hath covered my face.
[8]I am become a stranger to my brethren,
And an alien to my mother's children.

---

[t] 22[24] Heb. adds *not despised*. This may be the original and *abhorred* due to a later scribe. It is improbable that both words are original.

[u] 22[24] Many scholars would revise so as to read *to answer the afflicted*, in order to make the parallelism with the next line complete.

[v] 22[24] So Gk. supported by the next vs. Heb., *from him*.

§ 127 This ps. is the work of an early reformer in spirit akin to the author of 22 and Mal. He voices his own painful experiences and that of the pious class who found in Nehemiah their champion against the indifferent, high-priestly party. Cf. Neh. 13. The unity of the ps. has been questioned but on insufficient grounds. The metre is not as regular as in certain pss. Apparently the psalmist voiced his impassioned cry for help first in the four-beat measure, [1-8]. Then he concluded with the three-beat measure. It is possible that [32-36] were added to adapt the ps. to liturgical use. The orignal ps. probably comes from the days of Nehemiah and therefore from the middle of the Persian period.

[w] 69[4] Syr., *More numerous than my bones are those who hate me without cause*. This may be original, for it preserves the perfect parallelism with the first member of the couplet.

[x] 69[4] Lit., *spoiled not*, *i. e.*, took by violence.

[y] 69[5] It is not clear what was the nature of the psalmist's folly and sin. The vagueness suggests that this is but a general confession of sin that he may be assured of Jehovah's full favor.

[z] 69[6] With Gk., omitting *Lord*.

9For the zeal for thy house[a] hath consumed me,
And the reproaches of those who reproach thee have fallen on me.
10When I afflicted[b] my soul with fasting,
Even that was a reproach against me.
11When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a taunt song to them.
12They who sit in the gate talk of me,
And I am the song[c] of the drunkards.

Let God in his goodness deliver

13But as for me, my prayer is to thee,[d]
O Jehovah, in an acceptable time,
O God, in the abundance of thy lovingkindness,
Answer me in the truth of thy salvation.
14Deliver me out of the mire, that I sink not,
Let me be delivered from mine enemies and from the deep waters.
15Let not the flood of waters[e] overwhelm me,
Let not the deep swallow me up,
And let not the pit shut its mouth upon me.
16Answer me, O Jehovah, according to thy lovingkindness,[f]
As thy compassion is great, turn to me.
17And hide not thy face from thy servant,
For I am in distress; answer me speedily.
18Draw nigh to my life, and redeem it;
Ransom me because of mine enemies.

The pitiless foes

19It is thou who knowest my reproach;
My shame and my dishonor are before thee.
20Reproach hath broken my heart,
And I am sick because of all mine adversaries;[g]
When I hoped for some to pity, there was none,
And for comforters—I found not one.
21They also gave me gall for my food,
And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

May their guilt be punished

22Let their table before them become a snare,
And their peace-offerings[h] become a trap.
23Let their eyes be darkened, that they cannot see,
And their loins be continually shaking.
24Pour out thine indignation upon them,

---

a 69[9] *I. e.*, devotion to the temple and resentment at its pollution.
b 69[10] Lit., *wept.*
c 69[12] The Heb. word describes a song sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments.
d 69[13] This vs. contains an interesting example of the enveloping or introverted parallelism in which the first and fourth and the second and third lines are parallel to each other.
e 69[15] *I. e., the grave and Sheol.*
f 69[16] Heb., *for thy lovingkindness is good*, but this is probably due to scribal expansion, for it destroys the metre and perfect parallelism of the vs.
g 69[20] In the Heb. the metre and parallelism have been destroyed through a scribal error. Transferring the clause *all mine adversaries* to the end of the line, where it probably stood originally, restores the balance and meaning of the vs.
h 69[22] So Syr. The Heb. as it stands is unintelligible.

And let the fierceness of thine anger overtake them.
[25]Let their habitation[i] become utterly desolate;
Let none be dwelling in their tents.
[26]For they pursue him whom thou hast smitten,
And they tell of the sorrow of him[j] whom thou hast wounded.
[27]Add iniquity to their iniquity,
And let them not come into thy righteousness;[k]
[28]Let them be blotted out of the book of the living,[l]
And let them not be inscribed with the righteous.

Let thy servant again praise thee

[29]But I indeed am poor and sorrowful;
Let thy salvation, O God, set me on high.
[30]I will praise God's name with a song,
And will magnify it with a hymn of thanksgiving;
[31]And it will please Jehovah better than an ox,[m]
Or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

Let the afflicted who trust Jehovah be assured of his gracious care

[32]See it, ye afflicted, and be glad;[n]
Ye who seek after God, let your heart live.
[33]For Jehovah heareth the needy,
And despiseth not prisoners who suffer for him.[o]
[34]Let heaven and earth praise him,
The seas, and everything that glideth therein.
[35]For God will deliver Zion,
And rebuild the cities of Judah;
And they shall abide there, and possess it.
[36]The seed also of his servants shall inherit it,
And they who love his name shall dwell in it.

§ 128. A Cry for Speedy Deliverance, Ps. 31^{1-8}

Save thy servant

Ps. 31 [1]In thee, O Jehovah, I seek refuge;
Let me never be put to shame.
In thy righteousness deliver and save[p] me.
[2]Incline thine ear unto me,
Save me quickly, O Jehovah,
Be thou to me a strong rock,

---

[i] 69^{25} Lit., *encampment*.
[j] 69^{26} So one Heb. MS. and Targ. Heb., *those*.
[k] 69^{27} *I. e.*, may they bear the consequences of their guilt and not enjoy Jehovah's pardon and purification.
[l] 69^{28} Cf. Mal. 3^{16}.
[m] 69^{31} Here song service and the individual feeling that it expressed is placed above sacrificial offerings.
[n] 69^{32} Slightly revising the Heb. as the context demands.
[o] 69^{33} Lit., *his prisoners*.
§ 128 Cobb finds in Ps. 31 three distinct units, $^{1-8}$, $^{9-13}$, and $^{14-24}$. In $^{1-8}$ the note is calmer and the three-beat measure prevails; in $^{9-24}$ the five-beat measure. Vss. $^{9-24}$ appear to be a unit, the second half introducing the note of trust and hope that characterizes the majority of the pss. of this group. Both pss. contain many quotations from the earlier prophets, and they probably come from the first half or middle of the Persian period.
[p] 31^{1} So Gk. supported by the metre. Heb. has lost the second verb.

A house of defence to deliver me;
3 For thou art my rock and my fortress,
And for the sake of thy name, O Jehovah,[q]
Be gracious to me and guide me.
4 Bring me out of the net they have hid for me;
For thou, indeed, art my stronghold.

For thee I trust

5 Into thy hand I commit my spirit;
Thou hast ransomed me, O Jehovah, God of faithfulness.
6 Thou hatest[r] those who regard false idols,[s]
But I look in trust to Jehovah.
7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy kindness,
Thou who hast seen mine affliction.
Thou didst know that my life was in peril;
8 And thou hast not shut me up in mine enemy's hands,
Thou hast set my feet in a broad place.

§ 129. Petition of a Faithful Servant of Jehovah, Ps. 31^{9-24}

The suppliant's distress

Ps. 31 9 Be gracious to me, O Jehovah, for I am in distress;
Mine eye is consumed with grief, my soul and body;[t]
10 For my life is consumed with sorrow and my years with sighing;
My strength faileth because of mine affliction[u] and my bones waste away.

His loss of friends and reputation

11 With all my adversaries I am become a reproach, and a horror to mine neighbors;[v]
And I am a terror to mine acquaintances, those who see me on the street flee from me.
12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind, I am like a broken[w] vessel;
13 For I hear the slander of many, terror[x] all around;
While they plot together against me, they plan how to take my life.

Prayer for deliverance from foes

14 But I trust in thee, O Jehovah,[y] thou art my God;
15 My times are in thy hands, deliver me from mine enemies and my persecutors.
16 O let thy face shine upon thy servant, deliver me because of thy loving-kindness.[z]

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[q] 31^{3} One MS. and the Syr. supply *Jehovah*, which is lacking in the Heb.
[r] 31^{6} So the different VSS. and demanded by the context. Heb., *I hate*.
[s] 31^{6} Lit., *vapors of vanity*, a characteristic designation in the later O.T. writings of heathen idols.
§ 129 Cf. introd. note to § 128.
[t] 31^{9} Possibly the last two words in this line have been corrupted in transmission.
[u] 31^{10} Following the Gk. and Syr. and the demands of the context.
[v] 31^{11} Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads *exceedingly* and makes no sense.
[w] 31^{12} Or *lost*.
[x] 31^{13} *I. e., threats*.
[y] 31^{14} Heb. adds *I said*. But this is not supported by the metre and detracts rather than adds to the line.
[z] 31^{16} A scribe has introduced the following note which lacks the regular metre of the preceding and following lines and interrupts the sequence of thought by introducing an alien thought: *Let me not be ashamed, O Jehovah, for I have called unto thee; let the wicked be ashamed, let them be silent in Sheol; let the lying lips be put to silence which speak insolence against the righteous proudly and contemptuously.*

Jehovah's goodness to his people

19 O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for those who fear thee,
Which thou hast done before the sons of men for those who trust thee!
20 Thou hidest them in the secret of thy presence from the plots of men,
Thou keepest them secretly in a shelter away from the strife of tongues.

Thanksgiving

21 Blessed is Jehovah, for he hath showed me his marvellous kindness;[a]
22 For I, indeed, said in my haste, I have been cut off from thy presence.
Nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried to thee.
23 Love Jehovah,[b] all ye his saints; Jehovah keepeth faithfulness,[c]
And requiteth to the uttermost the one who acteth proudly.
24 Be strong and let your mind take courage, all who wait for Jehovah.

§ 130. **Prayer for Deliverance from Powerful Foes,** Ps. 54

The need of help

Ps. 54 1 Help me, O Jehovah, by thy name,
And by thy might execute judgment for me.
2 O Jehovah hear my prayer,
Give ear to the words of my mouth.
3 For proud ones[d] have risen up against me,
And terrible ones have sought my life;
They have not set Jehovah before their eyes.[e]

The deliverance desired

4 Lo, Jehovah, my helper!
The Lord, upholder of my life!
5 May calamity come back upon my foes;
In thy faithfulness cut them off.
6 Willingly would I offer thee sacrifice;
Thy name[f] would I praise, for it is good,
7 When from all trouble thou hadst delivered me,
And mine eyes had looked on mine enemy.

§ 131. **Petition for Deliverance from Treacherous Foes,** Ps. 55

Victim of persecution

Ps. 55 1 Give ear to my prayer, O Jehovah, and hide not from my supplication.
2 Give heed to me and answer me, I am distracted[g] by my complaint,

---

[a] 31[21] The Heb. adds *in a strong city*. Possibly this is a corruption for *in the time of distress*. But the clause destroys the metrical symmetry of the vs. and in all probability was added by a scribe, who had in mind Ps. 60[9].

[b] 31[23] This and the following vs. may be a refrain added by a later editor who desired to adapt the ps. to liturgical uses.

[c] 31[24] Or *Jehovah preserveth the faithful*.

§ 130 It is not entirely clear whether the foe in the mind of the psalmist is an individual or a national oppressor. The personal note, however, is strong and the ps. is closely akin to many which come from the first half of the Persian period.

[d] 54[3] So certain Heb. MSS. and Targ. Trad. Heb., *strangers*, following a different punctuation of the text.

[e] 54[3] Possibly this line is secondary.

[f] 54[6] Heb. adds *Jehovah*.

§ 131 Vss. [9-14] strongly suggest that the psalmist's foes are definite individuals, not hostile peoples, and that this is a personal prayer expressing the feelings of his class. His longing to fly away from all the treachery and turmoil of the city is pathetic. The reference to the walls in [10] points, on the whole, to the middle of the Persian period or later.

[g] 55[2] Lit., *I am restless*.

3 And I moan because of the voice of the enemy, the oppression[h] of the
wicked;
For upon me they cast iniquity, and in anger they attack me.

Longing for escape

4 My heart throbbeth[i] in my bosom, and the death anguish[j] overtaketh me.
5 Fear and trembling are come upon me, and horror overwhelmeth me.
6 And I say, 'Had I but wings like a dove, I would fly away and be at rest;'
7 Lo, then would I wander far off, I would lodge in the wilderness;
8 I would haste to my place of refuge, to a shelter from the stormy wind.[k]

Oppression within the city

9 Confound their counsel,[l] O Lord, and confuse their tongue,
For verily I gaze upon violence and strife in the city.
10 Day and night they go about it, upon the walls thereof;
Iniquity and mischief are within it, 11 wickedness is in its midst;
From its market-place nevermore depart oppression and deceit.

A treacherous friend

12 For it was not an enemy who reviled me—that I could bear—
It is not my foe who magnified himself against me—from him I could
hide—
13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my companion and my familiar friend.
14 Together we used to take sweet counsel, we used to walk[m] in God's house.
15 Let death come suddenly upon him, let him go down alive to Sheol![n]
20 For he hath put forth his hands against his friends, he hath profaned his
covenant.[o]
21 His mouth is smoother than butter, but war is in his heart;
His words are softer than oil, yet they are like drawn swords.

Invincible hope

16 As for me, I will call upon God, and Jehovah will save me;
17 Evening and morning and noon will I complain and moan;
And my voice will he hear and 18 redeem my soul in peace
From the battle that is waged against me, though mine opposers are many.[p]
19 God will hear and humble them—he who is enthroned of old.[q]

Epilogue

23 But thou, O Jehovah, wilt bring them down into the pit of destruction;
These men of blood and deceit will not live out half of their days;

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[h] 55[3] Or, emending, *cry of*.
[i] 55[4] Lit., *writhes*.
[j] 55[4] Lit., *terrors of death*.
[k] 55[8] Heb. adds, probably as the result of dittography, *tempest*. The absence of the connective reveals its secondary origin.
[l] 55[9] Following Targ. in supplying *their counsel*, required to complete the line.
[m] 55[14] Heb. adds *with the throng*, but this destroys the symmetry of the line and is probably a scribal expansion.
[n] 55[15] Suddenly the poet is enraged at the perfidy of his friend and calls down a malediction upon him. The reason of his hot anger is given in [20, 21], but a later scribe, familiar with the story of Korah in Nu. 16[33], has added, *for evils are in their dwellings*. Under the influence of this gloss the number suddenly changes from singular to plural in the Heb.
[o] 55[20, 21] Evidently these lines have been displaced, for they make no sense in their present position. Transferred to a place after [15], they supply the contrast demanded by the context.
[p] 55[18] This line is doubtful and may be secondary. It supplies, however, the antecedent required in [19] and its present form may simply be due to scribal errors.
[q] 55[19] To this vs. in the Heb. is appended what is probably a scribal note, *who have no changes and who fear not God*.

As for me, ever will I trust, O Jehovah, in thee.
22 Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he will sustain thee;[r]
Never will he suffer the righteous to be moved.

§ 132. Prayer for Rescue from Persecutors, Ps. 57[1-4, 6]

A cry for help

Ps. 57 1 Be merciful to me, O Jehovah, be merciful, for in thee I[s] take refuge;
In the shadow of thy wings I take refuge until calamities be overpast.
2 I cry to God Most High, to God who dealeth bountifully with me;
3 May he send from heaven and save me from[t] the reproach of him who would swallow me;
May Jehovah send forth in my behalf[u] his lovingkindness and his faithfulness.

The imminent peril

4 My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie among the devourers of men,[v]
Whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.
6 They have prepared a net for my steps, that I might bow down;[w]
They have dug a pit before me, but they have fallen therein.

§ 133. Prayer for Preservation from Secret Enemies, Ps. 64

Cry for help

Ps. 64 1 Hear my voice, O Jehovah, in my plaint,
Save my life from dread of the foe.
2 Hide me from the council of evil-doers,
From the throng of the workers of iniquity,
3 Who whet their tongue like a sword,
Like an arrow they fit a bitter speech,
4 That they may shoot in concealment at the perfect;
They shoot at him suddenly and fear not.
5 They encourage themselves in an evil purpose,
They confer about laying snares,
They say to themselves, 'Who will see?
6 Let them search after iniquity; we are innocent;
Even though the search be very thorough,[x]
Man's heart and mind is unfathomable.'

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[r] 55[22] This vs. belongs more properly at the end of this much-disarranged ps., for [22] is the natural sequel to [19].

§ 132 The petitioner is apparently an individual and his foes the rapacious rulers whose cruelty during the middle of the Persian period inspired many of these impassioned cries for divine intervention. A scribal editor has attributed it to David and connected it with the time when he fled from Saul in the cave. To this prayer has been added a song of thanksgiving, [5, 7-12], which appears again in 108[1-5].

[s] 57[1] Lit., *my soul*.

[t] 57[3] Supplying a letter required by the context. Possibly the original read *from the hand of*.

[u] 57[3] Restoring a word which a later scribe mistook for *selah*.

[v] 57[4] Lit., *those who consume the sons of men*.

[w] 57[6] Some commentators would revise so as to make the parallelism complete with the last line, *their own soul is caught*.

§ 133 Again the pitiable fate of the righteous but sadly persecuted class in the Judean community is voiced in song. Probably the ps., like others of this class, comes from the middle of the Persian period.

[x] 64[6] This vs. is exceedingly doubtful. The VSS. and commentators differ widely. The above translation assumes that [6] continues the speech of the plotters. It voices the criminal's attitude toward his crime.

7 But Jehovah will shoot at them with an arrow,
Suddenly shall the blow[y] fall upon them;
8 And he will cause them to stumble by their tongue;[z]
All who see them shall wag the head.
9 And all men shall be filled with fear,
And shall declare the work of God,
And shall wisely consider what he hath done.
10 The righteous will rejoice in Jehovah,
Yea, they will take refuge in him,
And all the upright in heart will glory.

Assurance that God will deliver

§ 134. Prayer for Preservation from Enemies, Ps. 25

Protect those who trust thee

Ps. 25 1 To thee, O Jehovah, I lift up my soul,[a]
2 I trust in thee, let me not be ashamed;
Let not mine enemies exult over me,
3 And let none that wait on thee be ashamed;
Let them be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.[b]

Guide

4 Show me thy ways, O Jehovah,
Teach me thy paths.
5 Lead me in thy truth and teach me,
For thou art the God of my salvation,
And[c] on thee do I wait all the day.

Pardon

7b According to thy lovingkindness remember me;[d]
6 Remember thy tender mercies,[e] O Jehovah,
For they, indeed, are of old.
7a The sins[f] of my youth, do not remember,
7c Because of thy goodness, O Jehovah.

Jehovah's gracious dealing with men

8 Good and upright is Jehovah,[g]
He teacheth sinners in the way,
9 He guideth the meek in the right,
And teacheth the meek his way.

---

[y] 64[7] Lit., *their blows*.

[z] 64[8] Restoring the text as the context requires.

§ 134 Like the other acrostic pss., this is a mosaic without close logical connection or climax. It draws largely from Job, II Is., and Ex. 33, 34, but there is much that is original in the ps. The didactic purpose is obvious and it probably comes from the latter part of the Persian or from the Gk. period.

[a] 25[1] The second line in the first couplet has been lost, except that the words *O my God* have been preserved.

[b] 25[3] Or *without effect*, lit., *in vain*.

[c] 25[5] So Gk. Heb. has lost the initial letter required by the acrostic structure of the chapter.

[d] 25[7b] Through a scribal error this line has been transferred to the seventh vs., with the result that it contains three instead of two lines. Restored as above, it completes the defective couplet and is in perfect keeping with the following context.

[e] 25[6] As a result of the scribal errors in the present context, *thy lovingkindness* has been repeated from [7b]. At its present position at the end of [6a] it destroys the regular metrical symmetry of the vs.

[f] 25[7a] So Syr. Heb. adds *my transgressions*.

[g] 25[8] Heb. adds *therefore*.

10 All his ways[h] are mercy and truth,
To those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.
11 For the sake of thy name, O Jehovah,
Pardon[i] mine iniquity, for it is great.

Prosperity of those who revere Jehovah

12 Who is he that feareth Jehovah?
He will instruct him in the way that he shall choose.
13 He himself will dwell in prosperity,
And his seed will inherit the land.
14 Jehovah's secret is with those who fear him,[j]
That he may make his covenant known to them.

Deliver and pardon, O Jehovah

15 Mine eyes are ever toward Jehovah,
For he bringeth forth my feet from the net.
16 Turn toward me and be gracious to me,
For I, indeed, am desolate and afflicted;
17 Relieve me[k] of the troubles of my heart,
And from my distresses bring thou me forth;
18 Observe[l] mine affliction and my pain,
And grant thou forgiveness of all my sins.

Preserve me

19 Consider mine enemies for they are many,
And they hate me with violent hatred;
20 Oh keep my life and deliver me,
Let me not be ashamed for in thee I put my trust.
21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,
For I wait for thee, O Jehovah.[m]

§ 135. Prayer for Deliverance from Wrong-Doers, Ps. 28

Invocation

Ps. 28 1 To thee[n] I call, O my Rock, turn not a deaf ear to me;
Lest if thou turn a deaf ear to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.[o]
2 Hear[p] the voice of my supplications when I cry to thee;
While I lift up my hands, O Jehovah,[q] toward thy holy shrine.

---

[h] 25[10] Heb., *all the ways of Jehovah*. But the metre of the vs. strongly suggests that this was a scribal expansion from the original which read *all his ways*.

[i] 25[11] Slightly correcting the Heb. as the context requires.

[j] 25[14] *I. e.*, the reverential attitude is necessary for insight and understanding of the divine purpose and for the establishment of the intimate bond between him and the individual.

[k] 25[17] Dividing the Heb. letters as the context requires.

[l] 25[18] Supplying the verb required by the acrostic structure of the chapter. A scribe, by mistake, has repeated at the beginning of [18] the initial word of [19].

[m] 25[21] So Gk. Heb. omits *O Jehovah*. A later editor has added, in order to adapt the ps. to liturgical use, *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles*.

§ 135 There are many points of contact between this ps. and 15, 24[3-6], and Dt. 26[1-11]. It was written in a time of quiet and reveals an intense interest in the ritual. It is probable that its author was a Levite and that he lived late in the Persian period or else soon after the conquests of Alexander.

[n] 28[1] Omitting *Jehovah*, which is not supported by the metre or the context.

[o] 28[1] *I. e.*, die.

[p] 28[2] Gk., *Jehovah hath heard*.

[q] 28[2] Inserting *Jehovah* as the metre demands.

Deliver thine own and punish the wicked

3 Draw me not away with[r] the wicked and with the workers of iniquity,
Who are speaking of peace to their neighbors while mischief is in their hearts.
4 O requite them according to their deeds, and the evil of their doings;[s]
5 According to the work[t] of their hands render to them their desert.

Thanksgiving for the assurance of divine help

6 Blessed be Jehovah for he hath heard the voice of my supplications;
7 Jehovah is my strength and my shield, my heart trusteth in him;
And I am helped and my heart doth exult, therefore with my song will I praise him.
8 Jehovah is the strength of his people, and the saving refuge of his anointed.[u]

Epilogue

9 Save thy people and bless thine inheritance;
Feed them also and lift them up forever.

§ 136. Petition for Jehovah's Help against Malicious Foes, Ps. 40[13-17]

Overthrow the foes

Ps. 40 13 Be pleased, O Jehovah, to deliver me,[v] make haste to help me;
14 May those who seek my life be ashamed and confounded together;[w]
Let them be turned back and put to shame, who delight in my misfortune;
15 Let them be desolate because of their shame, who say,[x] Aha, aha.

Succor the faithful

16 Let all who seek thee exult and rejoice in thee;
Let those who love thy salvation continually[y] magnify Jehovah.
17 Since I am afflicted, O Jehovah,[a] hasten thou to me;
O thou my helper and my deliverer, my God, tarry not.

§ 137. An Old Man's Prayer for Deliverance, Ps. 71

Deliver thy servant, O Jehovah

Ps. 71 1 With thee, O Jehovah, I seek refuge;
Let me never be put to shame.

---

[r] 28[3] *I. e.*, do not count me in the number of.

[s] 28[4] A scribe has added the following explanatory note, based on Is. 5[12] and Jer. 24[6], and 45[4], *For they do not appreciate the deeds of Jehovah, and the works of his hands; he will destroy them and not build them up.*

[t] 28[5] So Targ. and Gk. and the requirements of the context.

[u] 28[8] So Gk., Syr., and certain MSS. This is clearly the original reading as indicated by the following vs. From the parallelism and the context it is clear that Jehovah's anointed was the messianic nation. A later scribe, however, who regarded the Anointed One as the promised messianic king, changed *for his people* to *for him* in the first part of the vs. The passage in its original form is richly suggestive of the sense in which the term Messiah or Anointed was frequently used by the psalmist.

§ 136 Although joined to another ps., it is evident that this fervent prayer was once entirely independent, for it appears as Ps. 70 in a later collection. Its historical background was evidently a time of persecution.

[v] 40[13] Heb. adds, repetitiously, *Jehovah*.

[w] 40[14] So Ps. 70[2]. Heb. adds *to destroy it*.

[x] 40[15] So the parallel in Ps. 70[3]. Heb. adds *to me*.

[y] 40[16] This line in the Heb. is overfull. Probably the verb *say* was added from the parallel in 70[4].

[a] 40[17] The parallel, Ps. 70[5], has *God*, which evidently stood for an original *Jehovah*. This is clearly supported by the parallelism of the next line.

§ 137 This ps. is the prayer of an old man beset by foes. He was familiar with Dt., II Is., and many of the earlier pss., as his many quotations indicate. Vss. [1-3] are quoted from 31[1-3] with slight scribal variations. The dependence on these comparatively late writings and the lack of close literary unity suggest that the ps. comes from the Gk. period.

2 Deliver me in thy righteousness, and rescue me;
Incline thine ear to me and save me.
3 Be thou to me a strong rock,[b]
A house of defence[c] to deliver me;
For thou art my rock and my fortress.
4 Rescue me, O my God, from the wicked,[d]
From the hand of the unrighteous and violent;
5 For thou art my hope, O Lord,
My trust from my youth, O Jehovah.
6 On thee have I leaned from birth;
Thou didst take me from my mother's womb;
My praise shall be continually of thee.

For he is surrounded by malignant foes

7 I am an object of wonder[e] to many;
But thou art my strong refuge.
8 My mouth is full of thy praise,
And of thy honor throughout all the day.
9 Cast me not off in old age;[f]
Forsake me not when my strength faileth.
10 For mine enemies speak concerning me,
And they who lurk for my life counsel together,
11 Saying, 'God hath forsaken him;
Pursue and take him; for there is no deliverer.'
12 O God, be not far from me;
O my God, make haste to help me.[g]
13 Let the foes of my life be ashamed and disgraced,[h]
May they be covered with reproach and disgrace.[i]

Yet is ever extolling thee

14 But I, on my part, hope continually,
And praise thee yet more and more.
15 My mouth telleth of thy righteousness,
And of thy salvation throughout all the day,
Though I know not how to tell it.[j]
16 I will begin[k] with thy mighty acts, O Lord,[l]
I will make mention of thy righteousness, O Jehovah.
17 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth,
And still I declare thy wonderful works,
18 Yea, even to old age and gray hair.
O God, forsake me not,

---

[b] 71[3] So Gk., Targ., Syr., and the original in 31[2].
[c] 71[3] So parallel in 31[2].
[d] 71[4] Lit., *hand of the wicked*.
[e] 71[7] *I. e.*, a hideous object.
[f] 71[9] Lit., *time of old age*.
[g] 71[12] Cf., for original, Pss. 35[22], 40[13]. This vs. may be simply a scribal addition.
[h] 71[13] So many Heb. MSS. Syr. and Heb., *be consumed*.
[i] 71[13] Heb. adds, destroying the metre, *who seek my hurt*. It probably was taken from [24].
[j] 71[15] Following Briggs in translating this doubtful line.
[k] 71[16] Lit., *enter in*.
[l] 71[16] Dividing the line as the parallelism and metre require. Heb. adds *thine alone*.

Until I declare thy strength to a future generation,[m]
Thy might and thy righteousness, O God,
19 On high the great things thou hast done.

Give him cause to praise thee

Who, O God, is like thee,
20 Who hast caused me[n] to see many troubles?[o]
But thou wilt revive me[n] again,
And wilt bring me[n] up from the depths of the earth.
21 Thou wilt increase my glory and again[p] comfort me,
22 I will also praise[q] on the harp, thy faithfulness,[r] O my God,
To thee will I make melody on the lyre,
23 My lips will shout for joy,
My mouth[s] will make melody for thee,
And my life, which thou hast redeemed.
24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long;
For they are ashamed and disgraced who seek my hurt.

§ 138. Prayer for Deliverance from Treacherous Associates, Ps. 120

Save from treacherous foes

Ps. 120 1 To Jehovah in my distress I called, and Jehovah[t] answered me.
2 Oh deliver my soul from the lying lip, from the tongue that is deceitful.
3 What shall one requite thee, and what more, O tongue that is deceitful?
4 The sharpened arrows of a warrior, with glowing broom-coals.[u]

From those who love war more than peace

5 Woe is me that I sojourn with one that draweth the bow![v]
Woe is me that I dwell among the tents of Kedar!
6 Too long have I been dwelling with those[w] to whom peace is hateful;
7 I am for peace, but when I speak, they indeed are for war.

§ 139. A Cry for Deliverance from Violent and Treacherous Enemies, Ps. 140

Their malicious character

Ps. 140 1 Deliver me, O Jehovah, from evil men,
From men who are violent save me,

---

m 71:18 So Syr. Gk., *to all coming generations.*
n 71:20 So Gk., Syr., Lat., and variant Heb. Traditional Heb., *us.*
o 71:20 Heb. adds *and sore.*
p 71:21 So Gk.
q 71:22 Heb. adds *thee.*
r 71:22 Heb. adds *O my God* at the end of the first line and *O Holy One of Israel* at the end of the second. Both destroy the metre and are probably scribal expansions.
s 71:23 Conjecturally correcting the obviously corrupt Heb.

§ 138 This intense, passionate ps. was apparently written when apostates like the high priests Menelaus and Jason were in the ascendancy. The reference to the tents of Kedar in 5 is apparently to be interpreted figuratively. According to Gen. 25:13 Kedar was the second son of Ishmael. The poet likens his treacherous, quarrelsome foes to the Ishmaelites, one of Israel's earliest and most hated rivals.

t 120:1 Transferring *Jehovah* from the first part of the next vs., where it is superfluous, to 1, where it completes the measure.
u 120:4 This line evidently contains the psalmist's answer to the question propounded in 3. Charcoal of the broom-scrub is still widely used in the East because of the glowing heat which it furnishes.
v 120:5 Supplying *the bow*, required to complete the line, and repeating the *woe is me* required to complete the next line.
w 120:6 So eight Heb. MSS., Gk., Lat., and Syr.

§ 139 Vss. 12, 13, if original, indicate that the author of this ps. was in all probability a Pharisee in spirit, if not in reality. He was evidently a man prominent in the Jewish state. The foes of

[2]Who devise evil things in their mind,
All the time stir up wars,
[3]Who sharpen their tongue like a serpent;
The poison of vipers is under their lips.

Their treacherous designs

[4]Keep me, O Jehovah, from the transgressor's hands;
From men of violent deeds preserve me,
Those who plot to trip up my feet;[x]
[5]From the proud, who lay for me snares,
And have spread for me[y] cords as a net,
At the side of the track have set traps for me.

May their purposes be thwarted

[6]I say to Jehovah, 'Thou art my God;
Hear[z] the voice of my supplications;
[7]Jehovah,[a] my strength, my salvation,
Who shieldest my head in the day of battle,[b]
[8]Grant not[c] the desires of the wicked;
Let not his evil purpose[d] succeed.
[9]Those who encompass me raise their heads,[e]
Let the mischief of their own lips cover them.'
[10]May he rain coals[f] of fire upon them,
May he cause them to fall in pits from which they shall not rise.[g]

Triumph of the right

[11]Let not the deceitful man[h] be established in the land;
Let evil hunt the man of violence.[i]
[12]I know that Jehovah will maintain
The cause of the afflicted, the rights of the needy.
[13]Surely the righteous will give thanks to thy name,
The upright will dwell in thy presence.

§ 140. A Petition for Divine Guidance, Ps. 141

Hear, O Jehovah

Ps. 141 [1]O Jehovah I call on thee, hasten to me,
O give ear to my voice when I call to thee.

---

which he speaks in the opening stanzas were probably the apostate Jews and the Sadducees. While this ps. may come from the days of Nehemiah, it is most probably to be dated in the last part of the Gk. or the early Maccabean period.

[x] 140[4] Lit., *my footsteps.*

[y] 140[5] Gk., *for my feet.* The *for me* is not found in the Heb.

[z] 140[6] So Syr. and the evidence of the next vs. Heb. adds *Jehovah.*

[a] 140[7] Heb. adds *Lord.*

[b] 140[7] Lit., *in the day of weapons.*

[c] 140[8] Heb. adds *Jehovah.*

[d] 140[8] Gk. and Syr., *they plot.*

[e] 140[9] Transferring the final word of [8] to complete this sentence. Heb., *head.*

[f] 140[10] Heb. readings vary. The text has been slightly revised in the light of the context.

[g] 140[10] Again slightly revising the Heb., which at this point is exceedingly corrupt.

[h] 140[11] Lit., *a man of tongue*, one who uses his tongue deceitfully.

[i] 140[11] Heb. adds a doubtful explanatory clause usually interpreted *until he be overthrown.* It is exceedingly probable that the last three vss. are scribal additions, for they depart from the prevailing measure of the vs. and introduce general statements loosely connected with the passionate theme of the ps.

§ 140 Unfortunately the text of this ps. is exceedingly uncertain. Like several of the other Maccabean pss., it has been overlaid with later glosses. Thus in [5] is found the incongruous but pious utterance, *Should a righteous man smite me and reprove me, it were a kindness.* In [6] also we

2 My prayer is prepared as incense before thee,
The lifting up of my hands as an evening oblation.

3 Set, O Jehovah, a watch over my mouth, — Protect from evil act
A guard[j] at the door of my lips.
4 Incline not my mind to evil,
Wickedly to commit foul deeds
With men who practice iniquity;
Let me never taste of their dainties,
5 May the oil of the wicked not rest on my head,[k]
But may my prayer be ever[l] against their malice.

6 May their rulers be hurled down beside the rock; — Judge the wicked
7 As one splits open and bursts asunder on the ground,[m]
May their bones be scattered at Sheol's mouth.

8 But unto thee,[n] O Lord, are mine eyes; — Protect thy servant
I seek refuge in thee;[o] do not pour out my life.
9 Keep me from the snare they lay for me,
And from[p] the traps of the workers of iniquity.
10 Let the wicked fall into their own toils,
Whilst I alone escape.[q]

§ 141. A Prayer for Divine Intervention, Ps. 142

Ps. 142 1 I cry aloud to Jehovah, — Hear the cry of thy servant
I loudly supplicate Jehovah,
2 I pour out before him my complaint,
Before him I make known my trouble;
3 For my spirit within me fainteth,
But thou, indeed, knowest my path.
In the path wherein I must walk,
They have hidden for me a snare.
4 Look[r] to the right hand and behold;

---

find the sentence, having no connection with its context, *and they hear my words, for they are pleasant*. Many reconstructions have been suggested, but, removing these obvious glosses, the thought and unity of the ps. become reasonably clear.

j 141³ Or, interpreting the Heb. word as a verb, *keep*.

k 141⁵ So Gk. and Syr., supported by the context, the meaning being let me not receive the hospitality of the wicked, which included pouring oil upon the heads of guests. It is closely parallel in thought to the last line of ⁴.

l 141⁵ Slightly revising the Heb., which is obviously corrupt.

m 141⁷ Following Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 509).

n 141⁸ Heb. adds *Jehovah*, and certain Heb. MSS. have the variant reading *God*, suggesting that both are secondary.

o 149⁸ Slightly revising the Heb.

p 141⁹ Following the Gk. in correcting a scribal error.

q 141¹⁰ Following a suggestion of the Gk. in slightly revising the difficult Heb.

§ 141 This vigorous, impassioned ps. was originally individual rather than national. Vss. ⁶ and ⁷ imply that the author was in prison and deserted by his friends. He regards his vindication as the vindication of the cause of the righteous, whom he prominently represents. The data are not sufficient to determine the exact period from which this ps. comes. It fits well in the mouth of the high priest Onias III, who was betrayed by his associates and driven into exile during the closing years of the Gk. period.

r 142¹ Jehovah is apparently here addressed. Some commentators would interpret the verb in the first person, but there is no basis in the Heb.

None is there who recognizeth me,
Nowhere is there a refuge for me,
There is none that careth for my life.

And deliver from prison

5 To thee I cry, O Jehovah;
I say, 'My refuge art thou,
My portion in the land of the living.
6 Give heed to my cry,[s]
For I am brought very low;
Deliver me from my pursuers,
For they are stronger than I.
7 O bring me forth from prison,
That I may give thanks to thy name,
That the righteous may recognize with me,[t]
That thou dealest kindly with me.'

§ 142. An Importunate Prayer for Speedy Help, Ps. 143

Forgive and pardon

Ps. 143 1 O Jehovah, hear my prayer, give ear to my supplications;
In thy faithfulness and righteousness answer me; 2 enter not into judgment with me,[u]
Because in thy sight no man who liveth can be justified.
3 The[v] enemy pursueth my life, he stampeth me[w] to earth;
He compelleth me to dwell in darkness, like those who have been long dead.
4 My spirit within me[x] fainteth, and my mind is numb.
5 I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works,
I muse on the works[y] of thy hands; 6 I spread them forth to thee.
Like a land that is parched, my soul thirsteth[z] for thee.

Deliver and guide

7 Answer me quickly, O Jehovah; my spirit is failing;
Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the grave.
8 Make me early hear of thy lovingkindness, for in thee do I trust;
Show me the way in which I should walk, for unto thee is my longing.
9 Deliver me, O Jehovah, from mine enemies, for unto thee do I flee.[a]
10 Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God;
May thy gracious spirit ever lead me in a way[b] that is straight.

---

[s] 142[6] In this and the following vs. the intensity of the psalmist's thought leads him to fall into the strenuous two-beat measure.

[t] 142[7] Slightly revising the Heb., which reads *in me*.

§ 142 This ps. is a mosaic of phrases and vss. taken from Lam., II Is., and especially from earlier pss. Like many of the pss. of this type, it was probably originally personal but was well adapted to express the feelings of the faithful in the Judean community during the latter part of the Gk. and the beginning of the Maccabean periods.

[u] 143[2] Lit., *thy servant*.

[v] 143[3] Heb. begins the sentence with *for*.

[w] 143[3] Lit., *my life*.

[x] 143[4] Heb. adds *in my midst*.

[y] 143[5] So VSS. Heb., *deed*.

[z] 143[6] Adding the verb required by the context.

[a] 143[9] So one Heb. MS. The readings of the VSS. vary.

[b] 143[10] Revising the traditional Heb. with the aid of certain Heb. MSS.

11 For thy name's sake, O Jehovah, revive me,[c] bring me out of trouble;
12 In thy lovingkindness cut off my foes, and destroy all mine opposers;
For I am thy servant.

§ 143. Jehovah the Warrior's Stay, Ps. 144[1-11]

What he does for his people

Ps. 144 1 Blessed be Jehovah my Rock,
Who traineth my hands to fight,
My fingers, likewise,[d] to make war;
2 My kindness, my fortress, my stronghold,
My deliverer,[e] my shield, and my refuge,
Who subdueth peoples[f] under me.

May he now deliver them

5 Bow the heavens, O Jehovah, and come down,
Touch the mountains[g] that they may smoke,
6 Flash forth the lightning and scatter them,
Send forth thine arrows and terrify them.
7 Stretch forth thy hand from on high,
Pluck me forth from the mighty waters,
Deliver[h] me from the hand of foreigners,
8 Whose mouth doth speak deceit,
Whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

Their tribute of praise

9 A new[i] song will I sing to thee,
With a lyre of ten strings will I play to thee,
10 Who giveth victory to kings,
Who saveth[j] his servants from the hurtful sword.[k]
11 Deliver me from the hand of foreigners,
Whose mouth doth speak deceit,
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

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[c] 143[11] Omitting *in thy righteousness*, which is not found in the Gk. and is not supported by the context.

§ 143 This ps., like the preceding, is a composite of lines taken from Pss. 8, 33, 104, and especially from 18. The metrical symmetry of the ps. and the close logical connection between the first and second stanzas are interrupted by the insertion of 8[5]:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
The son of man, that thou considerest him?

and another vs. taken from 39[4, 5]. The warlike spirit that breathes through this ps. is clearly that of the Maccabean era.

[d] 144[1] Supplying the connective required to complete the measure.

[e] 144[2] So four Heb. MSS. Trad. Heb. adds *to me*.

[f] 144[2] So certain Heb. MSS. Lat., Syr., and Targ. Heb., *my people*.

[g] 144[5] So two Heb. MSS., Syr., and Targ. Heb., *thy heavens*.

[h] 144[7] A scribe, by mistake, has transferred this verb to the middle of the vs.

[i] 144[9] Omitting *God*, which destroys the measure of the vs. and from its position is, without reasonable doubt, a later addition.

[j] 144[10] A scribe has added *David*.

[k] 144[10] A scribe, influenced by the reading in [7], has added here the verb *pluck me forth*.

II

PETITIONS FOR DELIVERANCE FROM HEATHEN OPPRESSORS

Pss. 44, 59, 60, 74, 79, 80

§ 144. Prayer for Deliverance from Powerful Foes, Ps. 44

Jehovah's deliverances of his people in the past

Ps. 44 [1]O Jehovah,[a] with our ears have we heard,
And our fathers have recounted to us
The work which thou didst do in their days,
Thy signs[b] in the days of old:
[2]Nations thou didst dispossess[c] and plant them,
Peoples thou didst afflict and spread abroad,[d]
[3]For by their sword they did not possess the land,
Nor did their own arm give them the victory;
But it was thy right hand and thy arm,
And with the light of thy face didst thou favor them.

Jehovah, Israel's only salvation

[4]It is thou who art my king,
Commanding[e] the salvation of Jacob.
[5]Through thee we thrust down our foes,
In thy name we tread down our opponents,
[6]For not in my bow do I trust,[f]
And my sword doth not deliver me.
[7]But thou hast saved us from our adversaries,
And thou hast put to shame those who hate us.
[8]In Jehovah have we boasted continually,
And praised thy name forever.

Petitions for Deliverance from Heathen Oppressors.—The pss. of this group are all national and the foes described are outside the Jewish community. Most of them come from the days of the Maccabean struggle.

§ 144 This ps. is closely related to Ps. 22 and is full of echoes of II Is. Cf., *e. g.*, [22], *We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter*. The woes recounted are very similar to those described in Lam. 5. The note of faith and hope, however, is much stronger. The psalmist is clearly speaking in behalf of the community, for he frequently passes from the sing. to the plural, *e. g.*, [6, 7-10, 12, 14]. In [12] he speaks of *thy people* in the same way as he refers to *us* in the next vs. The abrupt transitions from the first sing. and plural and then to the third person is one of the peculiarities of the ps. It is a good example of a collective national ps. Its date is evidently the earlier half of the Persian period. Pathetic, indeed, in this setting is the impassioned cry in the concluding stanza, [23-26], which presents a dramatic contrast to the recital of Jehovah's acts of deliverance for his people in the past.

[a] 44[1] Heb., *God*. The original reading *Jehovah*, which a later editor has changed throughout these pss. to *God*, has been restored in the above translation.

[b] 44[1] This line is evidently corrupt. The present reading, *Thou, thy hand*, is unintelligible. A slight change in the Heb. letters, however, gives the above rendering, which is in harmony with the context. The initial word of [2] also belongs to the close of [1].

[c] 44[2] The reference in this vs. seems to be to the period of the Judges, when Jehovah dispossessed the older Canaanite peoples in order that the chosen people might inhabit the land. Cf. Am. 2[9].

[d] 44[2] Correcting the Heb. in accordance with the demands of the context. This interpretation of [2] is strongly supported by [3].

[e] 44[4] Dividing the Heb. letters differently from the accepted text and as suggested by Gk.A and Syr. Heb., *God of the commandment*.

[f] 44[6] Vss. [6-8] may be secondary, for they simply expand in the first person the thought of [3].

Present calamities

9 But thou hast cast off[g] and put us to shame,
And goest not forth with our hosts.
10 Thou[h] makest us turn back from our adversary,
And our haters rob us at will.
11 Thou hast given us up as sheep to be devoured,
And thou hast scattered us among the nations.
12 Thou sellest thy people for nought,[i]
And hast not enriched thyself by their sale.
13 Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbors,
To be mocked and derided by those about us.
14 Thou hast made us a byword among the nations,
A shaking of the head among the peoples.
15 My confusion is before me all the day long,
And shame doth cover my face,[j]
16 At the voice of him who reproacheth and revileth,
Because of the presence of the enemy and the avenger.

Israel faithful in the presence of calamity

17 Though all this[k] hath come upon us, we have not forgotten thee,
Neither have we falsely broken[l] thy covenant.
18 Our heart hath not turned backward,
And our steps have not turned aside from thy path,
19 Though thou hast crushed us down in the place of jackals,[m]
And with deep darkness thou hast covered us over.
20 Had we ever forgotten the name of our God,
Or spread forth our hands to an alien god,
21 Would not Jehovah have searched this out?
For he knoweth the secrets of the heart.
22 For thy sake we are slain all the day long,[n]
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Let Jehovah speedily arise to deliver

23 Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?
Arise, cast us not off forever.
24 Why dost thou hide thy face—
Forgettest our affliction and our oppression?
25 For our life is bowed down to dust,[o]
And our body cleaveth to the ground.
26 Arise for our help,[p]
And redeem us for thy kindness' sake.

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[g] 44[9] Certain Gk. MSS. and Syr. add the pronominal suffix *us*.

[h] 44[10] Possibly, following certain MSS., *God* or *Jehovah* should here be added.

[i] 44[12] Lit., *for no wealth*. The thought is that Jehovah had delivered the people into the hands of the foes without seeming reason or compensation.

[j] 44[15] Lit., *shame of my face doth cover me*.

[k] 44[17] *I. e.*, the calamity and disgrace that has overtaken the community.

[l] 44[17] Lit., *dealt falsely with*.

[m] 44[19] *I. e.*, the wilderness where jackals howl.

[n] 44[22] *I. e.*, our life is one prolonged tragedy.

[o] 44[25] *I. e.*, hangs on the verge of the grave.

[p] 44[26] The peril and distress of the poet is effectively expressed by the two-beat measure. The words are an echo of the ancient war-cry uttered when the Hebrews took up the ark, Nu. 10[35].

§ 145. Prayer for Deliverance from Pitiless Enemies, Ps. 59

Arise, O Jehovah, deliver and punish

Ps. 59 [1]Deliver me, O my God, from mine enemies,
Set me on high from mine assailants.
[2]Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,
And save me from men of blood.
[3]For, lo, they lie in wait for my life,
The mighty band together against me,
Not because of my transgression or my sin,
[4]O Jehovah, it is not because of mine iniquity
That they run up and take their stand against me.[q]
Arouse thyself to meet me, and see,
[5]Even thou, Jehovah, God of Israel,[r]
Arise to visit all the nations.
Be not merciful to any treacherous troublers.

The contrast between our foes and thee, O Jehovah

[6]They snarl continually like a dog,
They prowl about the city in the evening.[s]
[7]Behold, they belch out with their mouth;
Yea, swords[t] are in their lips;
For who, they think, is hearing?
[8]But thou, O Jehovah, laughest at them;
Thou wilt have all the nations in derision.
[9]To thee, O my strength,[u] do I sing praise,
For thou, O Jehovah, art my high tower.

Speedily consume them

[10]May my God, with his lovingkindness, come to meet me;
May Jehovah let me look upon mine enemies.
[11]Spare them not,[v] lest my people forget;
Scatter them, hurl them down by thy power,
O Lord, our Shield and Deliverer![w]
[12]Their every word[x] is the sin of their mouth,
Therefore let them be taken in their pride,
And for the curses and lies which they utter.
[13]Consume them[y] in thy wrath, that they be no more,

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§ 145 Vss. [5-11] strongly suggest that this ps. voices the woes of the Judean community, probably in the days before Nehemiah, and that the foes are the neighboring heathen nations that taunted and beset the defenceless Jews. A late editor associated it with the time *when Saul sent men and they watched the house to kill David*, I Sam. 19[8-17].

[q] 59[4] These are military terms describing an armed attack.

[r] 59[5] Heb. has both *God of hosts* and *God of Israel*. Inasmuch as *God of hosts* is incorrectly written, it is probable that this is the later scribal addition.

[s] 59[6] Following Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 52) in transferring the phrase *in the evening* to the second line, as the thought and metre require. So in [14].

[t] 59[7] Or *reproaches*.

[u] 59[9] Restoring the corrupt Heb. (which makes no sense) by the aid of the VSS. and the parallel in [17].

[v] 59[11] Correcting the trad. Heb., which reads *slay not*, contradicting [13].

[w] 59[11] Supplying *and Deliverer*, required to complete the measure.

[x] 59[12] Lit., *the word of their lips*. The meaning is not certain. The idea is, apparently, that their every word is their condemnation.

[y] 59[13] Following a probable reconstruction. Heb. repeats *consume*.

And let men know that Jehovah ruleth,[a]
Even to the ends of the earth.

14 They snarl continually like a dog,
In the evening they prowl about the city.
15 They range up and down for food,
And tarry all night if they be not satisfied.
16 As for me, I will sing of thy strength;
Every morning will I praise thy lovingkindness,
Because thou art my high tower,
And a refuge in the day of my distress.
17 To thee, O my strength, do I sing praises;
For thou, O Jehovah, art my high tower.[a]

§ 146. Prayer for Victory in the Presence of Defeat, Ps. 60

Ps. 60 1 Jehovah, thou hast rejected us, thou hast broken us; [Fate of Jehovah's people]
Thou hast been angry; oh restore us again![b]
2 Thou hast made the land to tremble, thou hast rent it;
Heal its breaches, for it shaketh.
3 Thou hast made thy people see hardship,
Thou hast made us drink staggering wine,

4 Thou hast given a banner[c] to those who fear thee, [Deliver as in the past]
Whereunto they may flee from the bow.
5 In order that thy beloved may be delivered,
Save us with thy right hand and answer us.[d]

6 God hath spoken in his sanctuary: [Redeem thy promises]
'I will exult, I will divide Shechem,
And the valley of Succoth will I mete out.
7 Gilead and Manasseh are mine,[e]
Ephraim also is the defence of my head,
Judah is my commander's staff,

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[a] 59:13 A scribe has added, contradicting the broad statement of the next line, *in Jacob*.

[a] 59:17 So 𝔊. A scribe has added, destroying the measure, the unusual phrase *God of my lovingkindness*.

§ 146 The date of this ps. is not clear although it evidently describes a definite situation. This may have been the destruction of Jerusalem, but the implication is that it was simply a great defeat from which the people hoped to recover. The invincible, warlike spirit points either to the pre-exilic or Maccabean age. The reference in 6 to Shechem implies that the Samaritan schism had taken place. Judah alone is Jehovah's chosen land. On the basis of the reference in 8a, a later editor has added an elaborate superscription connecting this ps. with David's victory over the Edomites recorded in II Sam. 8:13, 14. The editor had in mind a tradition akin to that in I Chr. 18:12, 13, for he speaks of Joab as the conqueror. The literary points of contact between this ps. and 44 are close. Its warlike, dauntless ambition in the presence of defeat finds its best historical setting in the days of Judas Maccabeus. Vss. 5-12 are quoted in 108:6-13 and combined with 60:6-12. The oracle in 6-9 may be older than the present ps. but the evidence is indecisive.

[b] 60:1 Or *thou didst turn us back*.

[c] 60:4 The meaning is not entirely clear, but probably the banner is the assurance that Jehovah will deliver his faithful one from the attacks (*bow*) of their foes. Vs. 5 contains the natural demand that he now redeem his ancient promises.

[d] 60:5 So variant Heb. readings. Trad. Heb., *me*.

[e] 60:7 Lit., *Gilead is mine and Manasseh is mine*.

[8]Moab is my washpot,
Upon Edom will I cast my sandal,
Over Philistia I[f] shout for victory.
[9]Who will bring me into the fortified city?[g]
Who is there that will lead me[h] to Edom?'

Give victory to our army

[10]Hast thou not rejected us, O Jehovah?
And wilt thou not go forth[i] with our hosts?
[11]Give to us help against the adversary,
For vain is the help of man.
[12]By the help of Jehovah let us do valiantly,
For it is he that will tread down our adversaries.

§ 147. A Complaint over the Devastation of the Temple by the Enemy, Ps. 74

Why dost thou disregard the woes of thy people

Ps. 74 [1]O God, why dost thou cast us off forever,
And let thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?
[2]Remember thy congregation which thou didst get of old,
The tribe of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed.
This mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.[j]

The destruction wrought by pitiless foes

[3]Direct thy footsteps[k] to the perpetual desolations,
All the evil that the enemy hath wrought in the sanctuary.
[4]Thine adversaries roar in the midst of thy place of assembly;
There[l] they set up their standards for signs.

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[f] 60[8] So the parallel in 108[10] and Syr. and Targ.

[g] 60[9] Cf. the parallel in 108[11]. The fortified city was probably Petra, the well-nigh impregnable capital of Edom.

[h] 60[9] Slightly revising the corrupt Heb.

[i] 60[10] So Sym. and Syr. Heb. adds *God*.

§ 147 This ps. is conspicuous for its passionate feeling, its intense patriotism, and its strong faith. In [12-17] it not only reflects the thought but rises to the majestic height of the book of Job. The reference in the opening vs. to *the sheep of thy pasture* reveals an intimate familiarity with Ps. 23. The same figure is used in Enoch to describe the scattered Jews who were persecuted under Antiochus Epiphanes for their fidelity to the faith of their fathers. The ps. bears all the distinctive marks of the Maccabean period. It is a vivid, pathetic description of the calamities which overtook the Jews and especially the temple during the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes. As Cobb says (*Bk. of Pss.*, 200), *This psalm has the value of a historical document which may be used to confirm the story of I Mac.* 4, *II Mac.* 8, *and not merely to illustrate it.* The description of the defacement and destruction of the temple by the emissaries of Antiochus Epiphanes in [4-7] is closely parallel to the description in I Mac. 1[54, 59], and especially in 4[38], which states that when the Jews went to rededicate the temple *they saw the sanctuary laid desolate, the altar profaned, the gates burnt, and shrubs growing in the court, as in a forest or as on one of the mountains, and the priests' chambers pulled down.* The reference in [8] to the destruction of the synagogues in the land also points to a comparatively late period. The same is true of the statement in [9] that the prophets had disappeared. The reference is closely parallel to that in I Mac. 4[46], which states that *they laid aside the defiled stones of the altar until there should come a prophet to give an oracle concerning them.* The question in [10] of *how long* is precisely the same as that which is dealt with concretely in Dan. 7, which comes from the midst of the same strenuous crisis. Vs. [8] voices the policy of Antiochus Epiphanes and [10] describes vividly the attitude of the heathen foes who encircled the Jews. The tendency revealed in [12] and [13] to look back to the past and draw from it inspiration for the present is another marked characteristic of the Maccabean period. The ps. was clearly written after 168 and before the rededication of the temple in 165 B.C. The evidence points to a date shortly before 165. The ps., therefore, probably comes from the same year as the encouraging messages in Dan. 7–12, and from the same circle of the Hasideans from which came the apocalypses in the book of Daniel. Like the author of Dan. 7–12, the psalmist looks not to the swords of the valiant patriots but to God for a sudden and signal deliverance.

[j] 74[2] Possibly this line was inserted by a scribe, for it destroys the unity of the couplets which characterise the ps. as a whole and is unnecessary.

[k] 74[3] Lit., *lift up thy feet, i. e.*, go in person to the ruins and to the desecrated temple's site.

[l] 74[4] Through the similarity of the Heb. words a scribe has omitted the Heb. word for *there*.

5 They hew away at the portal[m] with axes, as in a thick forest,[n]
6 And now all its carved work they break down with hatchet and hammers.
7 They have set thy sanctuary on fire;
They have defiled in the dust the dwelling place of thy name.
8 They have said in their heart, 'Let us destroy them altogether.'
They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

When wilt thou interpose?

9 We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet;
Neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.
10 How long, O God, shall the adversary reproach,
Shall the enemy blaspheme thy name forever?
11 Why drawest thou back thy hand, O Jehovah?[o]
Why dost thou hold back[p] thy right hand in the midst of thy bosom?

The evidence of thy power in the natural world

12 Thou,[q] O Jehovah, art our[r] king of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
13 Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength;
Thou crushedst the heads of the sea-monsters[s] in the waters,
14 Thou crushedst the heads of the leviathan[t] in pieces;
Thou gavest him as food to the people of the wilderness,[u]
15 It is thou who didst cleave out springs and brooks,[v]
It is thou who didst dry up mighty rivers.
16 The day is thine, the night also is thine;
It is thou who didst prepare the luminary[w] and the sun.
17 Thou didst fix all the boundaries of the earth;
It is thou who didst make both summer and winter.

Arise and vindicate by the overthrow of the wicked

18 Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Jehovah,
And that a foolish people hath blasphemed thy name.
19 Oh give not the life of thy turtle-dove[x] to the wild beast;
Forget not forever the life of thine afflicted.
20 Look on the fat ones,[y] for they, indeed, are full;[z]
The dark places of the earth are abodes of violence.
21 Oh let not the oppressed turn away abashed;
Let the poor and needy ever praise thy name.

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[m] 74[5] So Lat. (lit., *top of portal*), supported in part by Gk. Lit., *as the entrance upwards*.
[n] 74[5] Lit., *thicket of trees*.
[o] 74[11] Supplying the word *back* demanded by the sense of the context.
[p] 74[11] Correcting the Heb. as the context and parallelism require.
[q] 74[12] Again slightly restoring the text.
[r] 74[12] So Gk.
[s] 74[13] Apparently not a reference to the overthrow of the Egyptians in the waters of the Red Sea but to the conquest of Tehom, the primeval monster, and to the work of creation.
[t] 74[14] Cf. Job 3[8].
[u] 74[14] *I. e.*, the jackals. Cf. 63[10], 72[9]. RV, *inhabiting the wilderness*.
[v] 74[15] A reference to Jehovah's power over nature, as illustrated, *e. g.*, by the opening of the rock in order to provide water, Ex. 17[6], Nu. 20[8].
[w] 74[16] *I. e.*, the moon, as Gk.
[x] 74[19] *I. e.*, the defenceless people of Israel.
[y] 74[20] Heb., *look to the covenant;* but this is apparently due to a slight corruption of the Heb. which has been restored as Duhm suggests.
[z] 74[20] *I. e.*, of booty, hence the figure *fat*, which means arrogant and corrupt. *The dark places* may be the caves to which the Maccabean refugees fled and where many were slain.

22 Arise, O God, plead thine own cause,
Remember how the impious man reproacheth thee continually,
23 Forget not the clamor of those who are hostile to thee,
Nor the din of thine opponents which continually ascendeth.

§ 148. Prayer for Deliverance from the Hands of Cruel Persecutors, Ps. 79

Fate of Jehovah's people

Ps. 79 1 O God, the nations are come into thine inheritance,
Thy holy temple have they defiled,
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.
2 They have given the corpses of thy servants[a]
As food to the birds of the heavens,
The flesh of thy pious ones to the wild beasts;
3 Their blood have they poured out like water,
Around Jerusalem, with none to bury them.[b]
4 We are become a reproach to our neighbors,
The scorn and derision of those around us.

5 How long, O Jehovah, wilt thou be angry?
Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

May he speedily deliver them

6 Pour out thy wrath upon the nations[c] that know thee not,
Yea, upon the kingdoms, O Jehovah,[d] that do not call upon thy name;
7 For they have devoured[e] Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.
8 Remember not against us in judgment the iniquities of our forefathers;[f]

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§ 148 According to its superscription this ps. was included in a collection of Asaph pss. It has been assigned by different scholars to two different periods: the Bab. exile and the Maccabean struggle. There is practically no doubt, however, that it comes from the later crisis. In contents and point of view it is closely parallel to 74. The opening description of the desecration of the temple and of the slaughter of the faithful Jews is very similar to the account of Antiochus Epiphanes's merciless persecutions in II Mac. 8^{2-4}. There is no suggestion of such a slaughter when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem. Their treatment of the conquered people appears to have been characterised by their usual judicial fairness. The atrocities here described are also directed not so much against the Jews as against Jehovah and his temple. Vs. ^{11} implies that the prisoners were unjustly condemned to death, as in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The warlike, vindictive spirit that finds expression in $^{6, 12}$ is characteristic of the Maccabean period. The persecuted saints in ^{2} are, without reasonable doubt, the Hasideans, who later rallied about Judas. Vss. $^{4, 5}$ indicate that the author had in mind not the petty party persecutions under the hellenizing high priest Alcimus but the attacks and taunts of the hostile nations in the early days of the Maccabean struggle. The absence of any references to Judas or to the rededication of the temple indicate that it was written before 165. Like 74, it voices the feelings of the faithful about 167–166 B.C., when the persecutions of Antiochus were at their height.

This is one of the few pss. quoted in the first book of Maccabees. Vss. ^{2} and ^{3} are cited *as written in the scriptures* and are used to describe the slaughter of certain Hasideans by the perfidious Alcimus. If 79 was an early ps. it doubtless would have been spoken of as a ps. of David. The absence of such a tradition implies that it was known to be the work of a comparatively recent writer but of a poet whose words had already gained a certain degree of authority. The quotation in I Mac. 7^{17} is condensed and incomplete. It reads:

The flesh of thy saints . . .
And their blood they poured out round about Jerusalem;
And there was no man to bury them.

[a] 79^{2} *I. e.*, the Hasideans.

[b] 79^{3} Supplying the *them*, implied by the context, from the quotation from this passage in I Mac. 7^{17}.

[c] $79^{6, 7}$ An echo of Jer. 10^{25}. For *nations* or *heathen* in ^{6} Jer. 10^{25} has *families*. Influenced by the quotation from the earlier dirge, the metre here changes from the three to the five-beat measure.

[d] 79^{6} Supplying *Jehovah*, required by the metre.

[e] 79^{7} So the original in Jer. 10^{25}. Heb., *he devours*.

[f] 79^{8} Or *former sins*. Vs. ^{8} might refer to sins of either the earlier or of the present generation. The idea that one generation suffered for those of earlier generations was repeatedly taught in the O.T., *e. g.*, Ex. 20^{5}, Dt. 28^{15}, Jer. 11^{11}, Lam. 5^{7}, and rests upon a basis of practical experience.

Let thy compassion speedily come to meet us,[g] for we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy renown,
And deliver us, and forgive[h] our sins, for the sake of thy name.

And avenge their wrongs

10 Why should the heathen keep saying, 'Where is their God?'
Let the avenging of the shed blood of thy servants be known among the nations;[i]
11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thy face, O Lord,[j]
According to the greatness of thy arm preserve[k] those condemned to death,[l]
12 Yea, render to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom
Their reproach, wherewith they have cast reproach upon thee, O Lord.
13 So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture[m] will thank thee forever;
We will rehearse to generation after generation the praise due thee.

§ 149. Prayer That God Will Rescue and Reunite His People, Ps. 80

Rise and gather thy scattered tribe

Ps. 80 1 O Shepherd of Israel, hear!
Thou who leadest[n] Joseph like a flock;
Throned upon the cherubim, shine forth!
2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
Awaken thy warlike might,
And come thou to us for our salvation.
3 O God of hosts,[o] restore us,
Cause thy face to shine, that we may be saved.

How long before thou wilt restore our prosperity?

4 O Jehovah[p] of hosts, how long
Wilt thou be wroth while thy people pray?
5 Wilt thou feed them with the bread of tears,
And give them tears to drink by large measure,
6 Make us the butt[q] of our neighbors,
While our enemies make us their derision?[r]
7 O God of hosts, restore us,
Cause thy face to shine, that we may be saved.

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[g] 79[8] *I. e.*, let Jehovah in his mercy quickly deliver us. The figure is that of messengers coming to meet those in need.
[h] 79[9] Lit., *cover*.
[i] 79[10] A scribe has evidently expanded this line by adding *in our sight*.
[j] 79[11] Adding *O Lord*, required to complete the measure.
[k] 79[11] Lit., *save over, cause to remain alive*.
[l] 79[11] Lit., *sons of death*.
[m] 79[13] This last vs. may be a liturgical addition. It is an echo of 23, which this later psalmist evidently interpreted as a communal rather than individual ps.
§ 149 This ps., like 110 and 101, is a valuable historical document. The *boar* in [13], which has ravaged the vine Israel, transplanted by Jehovah from Egypt, is, beyond reasonable doubt, Antiochus Epiphanes. *The man of thy right hand, the son of the man whom Jehovah hath strengthened for himself*, is probably Judas Maccabeus. The poet in the opening stanza reveals his familiarity with Ezek. and in [8-11] with the late traditions regarding the kingdom of David. He hopes, like Ezek., for a union of the Heb. tribes and a restoration of the ancient glories.
[n] 80[1] Correcting traditional Heb. vocalization.
[o] 80[3] So Syr. Heb. omits *hosts*, but cf. [7].
[p] 80[4] Heb. insets *God*, but the form is ungrammatical, indicating that the word is not original.
[q] 80[6] Lit., *contention*.
[r] 80[6] So two Heb. MSS., Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., *to themselves*.

Thy tender care for Israel in the past

8 Thou broughtest[s] a vine out of Egypt;
Thou didst drive out the nations and plantedst it.
9 Thou didst clear the way before it,
And it took root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shadow,
And the cedars of God with its boughs;
11 It sent out its branches to the sea,
Yea, its shoots to the river.[t]

Its present devastation

12 Why hast thou broken down its walls,
So that all who pass by the way do pluck it?
13 The boar out of the wood doth ravage it,
And the wild beasts of the field feed on it.

Save thy vine

14 O God of hosts, restore us;
Look down from heaven and behold;
Give heed to this thy vine,
15 And the stock which thy right hand hath planted.[u]
16 They have burned it with fire, they have hewn it[v] down;
May they perish at the frown of thy countenance.[w]

Uphold thy people

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand,
Upon that man whom thou hast strengthened for thyself.
18 So will we not draw back from thee;
Quicken thou us and we will call on thy name.
19 O Jehovah, God of hosts, restore us;
Let thy face shine, that we may be saved.

III

IMPRECATORY PSALMS

Pss. 35, 58, 109, 129, 83, 137

§ 150. A Cry for Vengeance, Ps. 35

Petition that Jehovah arise in defence of his servant

Ps. 35 1 Plead thou, O Jehovah, my cause;[x] fight them who fight me.
2 Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help.

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[s] 80[8] Lit., *liftest up*.

[t] 80[11] *I. e.*, extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River, the traditional bounds of the Heb. empire under David.

[u] 80[15] A scribe, by mistake, has introduced [17b] here and then repeated it in its original position.

[v] 80[16] As it stands, the Heb. lacks consistency. The translation given above is based on a slightly different vocalisation of the traditional Heb.

[w] 80[16] *I. e.*, because their wanton act meets the divine disapproval.

Imprecatory Psalms.—The imprecatory pss. are not the highest products of Israel's faith. They are rather a survival of the ancient belief that a curse had a certain potency in itself. Under the influence of this belief the old Assyr. kings called down a curse upon any one who in future

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§ 150 This is a typical imprecatory ps. It evidently voices the woes and the problems of the faithful in the Judean community in the days preceding the appearance of Nehemiah. The foes are apparently the arrogant, impious Jews who had cast off all pity or sense of justice.

[x] 35[1] So eight Heb. MSS. and Syr. Trad. Heb., *with those who contend with me*. The Heb. word means *contend in the law courts*.

3Draw out spear and javelin[y] to meet those who pursue me;
Say to my soul, O Jehovah:[z] 'Thy salvation am I.'
4Let them be ashamed and brought to dishonor who seek after my life;
Let them be turned back and confounded who devise my hurt.
5Let them be as chaff before the wind, thy[a] messenger pursuing them.
6Let their way be dark and slippery,[b] thy[a] messenger pursueth them.
7For without cause they have spread their net for me; without cause digged a pit[c] for me.
8May[d] the net they have spread catch them; in their own pit[e] may they fall.
9Then my soul will be joyful in Jehovah; it will rejoice in his salvation.
10All my bones will say, 'Jehovah, who is there like thee,
Who deliverest the afflicted from the stronger, and the needy[f] from robbers?'

Ingratitude and pitiless cruelty of his foes

11Witnesses of violence[g] rise up, they ask me whereof I know not;
12They reward me evil for good, even the bereavement of my soul.
13But as for me when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth,[h]
I afflicted my soul with fasting, my prayer was in my bosom;[i]
14As though it had been my friend, my own brother, so I demeaned myself;
As a man mourneth for his own mother,[j] so was I bowed down in grief.
15But now, when I stumble, they rejoice, and gather together[k] against me;
Smiters, when I know it not, tear me asunder and cease not.[l]

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ages dared to remove or mutilate the royal inscriptions. The Heb. word for curse means *to bind*. The story of Balaam illustrates the popular conception of the effects of a curse. According to I Sam. 17[43], Goliath cursed David by his gods. II Kgs. 5[27] states that, as a result of Elisha's curse on the guilty Gehazi, he went out from men snow-white from leprosy. The Heb. sage, in Pr. 26[2], declares, *the curse that is causeless shall not come;* but he still held the popular belief regarding the curse pronounced for a cause.

The imprecatory pss. are uttered more in the spirit of early prophets than of Jesus. To interpret them rightly it must be remembered (1) that they were usually uttered in behalf of the nation or a persecuted class rather than of an individual; (2) that the men or nations against which they were uttered were cruel, shameless, deliberately, criminal, condemned by law and moral sense; (3) that in the minds of the psalmists the justice of Jehovah's rule of the world was the real issue at stake. The higher the poet's sense of justice and his conception of Jehovah's righteousness, the more passionate his prayer that Jehovah would not only vindicate his servants but himself. McFadyen has rightly said, *from this point of view the imprecations are only the vehement expression of a passionate belief in the moral order and of a desire to see its consummation hastened.* These pss. are grimly illumined by the context and by the pitiless age in which they were written; but for the same reason they are not adapted to modern Jewish or Christian worship.

[y] 35[3] With Briggs (*Pss.*, I, 103), correcting the Heb. as the context requires.

[z] 35[3] Supplying the *Jehovah* required by the measure.

[a] 35[5, 6] Heb., *the angel of Jehovah*, but Jehovah is addressed.

[b] 35[6] Lit., *darkness and slippery places*.

[c] 35[7] So Syr. Heb. introduces *pit* in the first instead of in the second part of the line where it belongs.

[d] 35[8] A scribe has introduced at the beginning of this vs. a quotation from Is. 47[11], *may destruction come upon him unawares*. The immediate sequel of [7], however, is [8b], which is concrete and carries on the figure and parallelism. Under the influence of the inserted quotation the original plural has been changed to the sing. in the Heb.

[e] 35[8] Restoring *pit*, cf. [7], for which *destruction* has been substituted under the influence of the quotation.

[f] 35[10] This line is an echo of Jer. 31[11] and may be secondary, for in its present form it does not fit the measure of the ps. Probably *afflicted*, which is repeated before *the needy*, is secondary and the line is original.

[g] 35[11] *I. e.*, those who bring unjust charges of violence against me.

[h] 35[13] *I. e.*, I put on the Oriental garments of mourning.

[i] 35[13] *I. e.*, I was engaged in constant prayer. Heb. adds *returned*.

[j] 35[14] Or *went in procession* (Briggs).

[k] 35[15] A scribe has, by mistake, repeated the verb *gather together*.

[l] 35[15] The text is probably corrupt and can be only conjecturally restored.

[16]In my pollution they bitterly mock me;[m] they gnash upon me with their teeth.
[17]Rescue[n] my life from the roaring lions,[o] my only one from the lions.
[18]I will give thanks in the great assembly; I will praise thee among much people.

May Jehovah vindicate and judge

[19]Let not mine enemies wrongfully[p] rejoice over me, winking with the eye,
[20]For they speak not peace, but against those who are at peace in the land;
They devise malignant designs [21]and they open wide their mouth against me;
They say, 'Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.'
[22]Thou hast seen it, O Jehovah, be not silent,[q] keep not afar from me;
[23]Rouse thee, awake for my judgment,[r] for my cause, O my God;
[24]Judge me, O Jehovah,[s] according to thy righteousness, and let them not rejoice over me.
[25]Let them not say in their heart, 'Aha, our desire![t] we have swallowed him up!'
[26]Let them be ashamed and confounded together who rejoice at my hurt;
Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves against me.
[27]Let them shout and be glad, who delight in my right and say continually:
'May Jehovah be magnified, who delighteth in the prosperity of his servant.'
[28]And my tongue shall talk of thy righteousness, of thy praise all the day long.

§ 151. Prayer for the Punishment of the Wicked and Vindication of the Righteous, Ps. 58

Guilt of the corrupt rulers

Ps. 58 [1]Are ye in very truth speaking what is right?
Do ye judge with equity the sons of men?
[2]Nay, all of you[u] work wickedness;
In the land your hands weigh out violence.
[3]The wicked become estranged as soon as they are born,[v]
Those who speak lies go astray from birth.
[4]Their venom is just like the venom of a serpent;
They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth its ear,
[5]Which payeth no heed to the voice of charmers,
To him who is the most skillful worker of spells.

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[m] 35[16] Again restoring the text conjecturally (with Briggs) and with the aid of the Gk.
[n] 35[17] Apparently a scribe has added the interjectional sentence at the beginning of the vs., *Lord, how long wilt thou look on*. The sequel of [16] is [17b].
[o] 35[17] Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads, *for their destruction*.
[p] 35[19] The Heb. has a cumbersome explanatory note, *those who hate me without a cause*.
[q] 35[22] Heb. adds *O Lord*, destroying the symmetry of the measure.
[r] 35[23] Again the Heb. adds *O Lord*.
[s] 35[24] Heb. adds *my God*.
[t] 35[25] Heb. repeats *let them not say*.
§ 151 This virile ps. probably comes from the first half of the Persian period. Its style is equal to that of Is. 56-59. It is addressed to the unprincipled rulers of the Judean community.
[u] 58[2] So Syr. Heb., *in heart;* but this is probably due to a scribal error.
[v] 58[3] Lit., *from the womb*.

Prayer for their punishment

6 Break their teeth, O Jehovah, in their mouth;
Tear out the fangs of the young lions, O Jehovah.
7 Let them melt as water that runneth away of itself;
Like tender grass[w] let them wither away.
8 Just like a snail[x] that melteth away let them go,
As a mole crawleth, which hath not seen the sun.[y]
9 Before their pots[z] begin to feel the thorns,
May he sweep them away, the living even as the burning.[a]

Vindication of the righteous

10 The righteous will rejoice when he seeth the vengeance;
He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked;
11 So that men will say, 'Verily there is a reward for the righteous;
Verily there is a God[b] that judgeth in the earth.'

§ 152. Prayer for Vengeance upon Relentless Adversaries, Ps. 109

Prayer to be delivered from wicked foes

Ps. 109 1 O God of my praise be not silent,
2 For the mouth of wickedness[c] they open against me,
They speak against me with a lying tongue,
3 With words of hatred they encircle me,
And fight against me without a cause.
4 In return for my love they persecute me;
But as for me, for them is my prayer.[d]
5 But they repay me evil for good,
And hatred in return for my love.

Imprecation upon a wicked ruler

6 Appoint a wicked man over him,
And let the adversary[e] stand at his right hand.
7 When he is tried, let him come forth condemned,
And let his prayer become a sin.[f]
8 Let his days be few,
Let another take his office.
9 Let his children become fatherless,

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[w] 58⁷ Slightly revising the text and transposing one word. Note the wealth of figures.

[x] 58⁸ So Targ., Gk., Lat., and Syr., *wax*.

[y] 58⁸ So Targ., supported by the context. Gk., Syr., and Lat., *hath fire fallen, they do not behold the sun*.

[z] 58⁹ So Syr. and one Heb. MS.

[a] 58⁹ Text doubtful.

[b] 58¹¹ Or, as in Ex. 22⁸, *are judges*.

§ 152 This ps. is a striking illustration of the survival of the belief in the potency of a curse pronounced upon the guilty, for it is one long curse. It is not clear whether the foe described in ⁶⁻¹⁹ is a typical enemy or a despotic ruler. The portrait in ¹⁶⁻¹⁸ would fit the perfidious high priests Menelaus and Jason or the arch persecutor of the Maccabean days Antiochus Epiphanes. If the latter is in the psalmist's mind, the other foes of which he speaks at the beginning and end of the ps. would be the minions of Antiochus and the apostate Jews. In any case the ps. probably comes from the early part of the Maccabean struggle. Like the other hideous fruits of war and conflict, it illustrates the savage rather than the diviner impulses in the human heart and should have no place in our modern worship.

[c] 109² Heb. adds *and the mouth of deceit;* but this destroys the metrical symmetry and is probably a scribal expansion. Briggs deletes the entire line.

[d] 109⁴ Heb., *and I myself, my prayer*. *For them* has probably fallen out or else this line is secondary. The next vs., however, supports it.

[e] 109⁶ *I. e.*, Satan to prosecute and persecute him.

[f] 109⁷ᵇ⁻⁹ Under the influence of the tense feeling the quick, excited two-beat measure appears.

And his wife become a widow.
10 Let his children be vagabonds and beggars,[g]
And let them be driven from their desolate habitations.
11 Let the creditor seize upon[h] all that he hath,
And let strangers make spoil of his labor.
12 Let there be none to extend kindness to him,
On his orphans let none take pity.
13 Let his posterity be completely cut off,
In a[i] generation let his[j] name be blotted out,
14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered,[k]
And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.
15 Let them be before Jehovah continually,
That he may cut off his[l] memory from the earth.

Because of his vindictive cruelty

16 Because he remembered not to show kindness,
But persecuted the afflicted and poor,
And the broken[m] in heart to kill him.
17 He loved cursing, therefore let it come upon him;[n]
And he delighted not in blessing; let it be[o] far from him.
18 He clothed himself with cursing as with a garment;[p]
Let it come into his inward parts like water,
And like oil penetrate[q] his bones.
19 Let it be to him like a garment which he putteth on,
And like the girdle which he girdeth on each day.
20 This be the reward of mine adversaries,[r]
And of those who speak evil against my life.

Petition that Jehovah save his needy servant

21 But thou, O Jehovah, my God,
Work with me for the sake of my reputation,[s]
Save me according to thy loving goodness;[t]
22 For afflicted and needy am I,
And my heart is wounded[u] within me.
23 I depart like the shadow, when it lengtheneth,
I am shaken off as easily as[v] a locust.
24 My knees totter from fasting,

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[g] 109[10] Correcting the corrupt Heb. by the aid of the Gk.
[h] 109[11] Lit., *strike at*.
[i] 109[13] So Gk. Heb., through change of one letter, *following*.
[j] 109[13] So certain Heb. MSS., Gk., and Lat. Heb., *their*.
[k] 109[14] So Syr. and demands of the metre. Heb. adds, under influence of next vs., *with Jehovah*.
[l] 109[15] So Gk. Heb., *their*.
[m] 109[16] Following the VSS. in correcting Heb.
[n] 109[17] Or, Gk. and Lat., *and it came upon him*.
[o] 109[17] So Gk. and Lat.
[p] 109[18] Following a slightly different punctuation of the Heb. as the context demands.
[q] 109[18] Supplying the verb implied by the context and required by the metre.
[r] 109[20] Again a scribe has added *from Jehovah*.
[s] 109[21] Lit., *name*, which in Heb. stood for character and reputation.
[t] 109[21] So Targ. Heb., *for good is thy love*. Possibly the parallel in [26] has the original of the Heb.
[u] 109[22] Possibly the Gk. and Syr., which read *writhes*, should be followed.
[v] 109[23] Heb., *like*.

And my flesh is losing fatness.
25 And to them I am become a derision,
When they see me, they shake their heads.

And vindicate his justice

26 Help me, O Jehovah, my God,
O save me according to thy lovingkindness,
27 That they may know that this is thy hand,
That thou it is, Jehovah, who hast done it.
28 Let them, indeed, curse, but do thou bless;
May my opponents[w] be disgraced, while thy servant rejoiceth;
29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with dishonor,
And let them wrap themselves in their shame.
30 I will give thanks to Jehovah with my mouth,
And I will praise him in the midst of the multitude;
31 For he standeth at the right hand of the needy,
To save him from those who would condemn him.[x]

§ 153. Prayer for Jehovah's Judgment upon Israel's Foes, Ps. 129

Jehovah's deliverance of Israel in the past

Ps. 129 1 Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth, let Israel now say,
2 Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me.
3 The plowers plowed upon my back, they made long furrows.
4 Jehovah is righteous; he hath cut asunder the cords[y] of the wicked.

Let Jehovah smite the foes of Zion

5 Let them be put to shame and turned backward, all those who hate Zion;
6 Let them be as grass upon the housetops, which withereth ere it sprouteth,[z]
7 Wherewith the reaper doth not fill his hand, nor the harvester his bosom.
8 Nor do those who pass by say, 'Jehovah's blessing be upon you!'[a]

§ 154. Cry for Signal Vengeance upon Israel's Heathen Foes, Ps. 83

Conspiracy of the foes of Jehovah's people

Ps. 83 1 O God, grant thyself no rest,
Be not silent, and be quiet, O God.

---

[w] 109[28] So Gk. Heb., *they arise.*

[x] 109[31] Slightly revising the Heb. Lit., *pronounce sentence upon his soul, i. e.,* condemn him to death.

§ 153 The literary beauty and pathos of this ps. are obvious. Even in describing the harrowing experiences of the centuries, the psalmist uses peaceful agricultural figures. The implied contrast heightens the effect. Vss. [3-4] point to the Maccabean era as the date of the ps.

[y] 129[4] The Gk. and Lat. suggest that possibly the original read *backs.* In that case the line would mean that Jehovah broke the might of Israel's wicked foes. The traditional reading, however, is clearly intelligible, *i. e.,* broke the bonds with which they had bound Israel.

[z] 129[6] Lit., *draw out (the blade).* Certain scholars regard this as a reference to the sickle with which the grass was cut.

[a] 129[8] Cf. Ruth 2[4]. A scribe has added a response, *We bless you in the name of Jehovah.*

§ 154 Briggs urges that the foes mentioned in [6-8] were those who confronted Nehemiah. Cf. Neh. 1–4. But to do this he is forced to identify Assyria in [8] with Samaria. Elsewhere in postexilic literature Assyria is the classic equivalent of its later derivative, Syria, *e. g.,* Zech. 10[10]. The Philistines, Syrians, and Moabites (sons of Lot) were not actively allied against the Jews in the days of Nehemiah. The historical situation that fully satisfies the implications of the ps. is graphically described in I Mac. 5. The brilliant initial victories of Judas led the encircling heathen nations, leaning on the arm of Syria, [8], to unite in a confederacy against the Jews. This ps. voices the feelings of the warriors who followed the gallant Judas in his hard-fought campaign against these peoples.

2 For, lo, thine enemies are in uproar,
And thine enemies have lifted up the head.
3 They craftily take counsel against thy people,
And conspire together against thy treasured ones:[b]
4 'Come and let us cut them off from being a nation,
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.'

List of the foes

5 For they have conspired together with one mind;
Against thee do they make a covenant:
6 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
The people of[c] Moab, and the Hagarenes,[d]
7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre,
8 Assyria is also joined with them;
They have helped[e] the children of Lot.

Prayer to punish as in the past by a great defeat

9 Do to them as thou didst to Sisera,[f]
As to Jabin at the Brook of Kishon.
10 Let them be destroyed as the Midianites at En-Harod,[g]
Who became mere dung for the ground.
11 May their nobles be as Oreb and Zeeb,
All their princes like Zeba and Zalmunna,[h]
12 Who said, 'Let us take them for our possession,
Let us enjoy[i] the dwelling places of God.'

To call on the mighty forces of nature

13 O my God, make them like whirling dust,
As the stubble driven by the wind,
14 As the fire that burneth the forest,
As the flame that setteth ablaze thy mountains;
15 So mayest thou pursue them with thy tempest,
And overwhelm them with terror by the storm.
16 Fill their faces with dishonor,
That they may seek thy name, O Jehovah.
17 Let them be put to shame and dismayed forever,
Yea, let them be confounded and perish,
18 That they may know that thou[j] alone art Jehovah,
The Most High over all the earth!

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[b] 83[3] Heb. adds, what is implied and usually omitted in the pss., *and they say*.

[c] 83[6] The parallelism and defective measure indicate that *people of* has probably been lost from the Heb.

[d] 83[6] Heb., *Hagrites*.

[e] 83[8] Lit., *have been an arm to*.

[f] 83[9] With Briggs, transposing *as Midian* to [10], where it belongs. The reference in [9] is to the defeat of the Canaanites recorded in Judg. 4.

[g] 83[10] Heb., *En-dor;* but this is, beyond much doubt, a scribal error for *En-Harod*, where, according to the late tradition in Judg. 7[1], Gideon defeated the Midianites.

[h] 83[11] Cf. Judg. 8[10-28].

[i] 83[12] Following Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 224) in a possible reconstruction of the Heb.

[j] 83[18] Heb. adds *thy name;* but this makes an impossible construction and was probably appended by a scribe who had in mind [16b].

§ 155. Imprecation against Israel's Pitiless Foes, Ps. 137

Sorrows of the exile

Ps. 137 1 By Babylon's streams we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion;
2 There,[k] by the poplars in her midst, we hung up our harps,
3 For there our captors demanded of us words of song,
They who spoiled us commanded,[l] 'Sing for us a song of Zion.'

Loyalty to Jerusalem

4 How could we sing the songs[m] of Jehovah in a land that was strange?
5 If thee I forget,[n] O Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten;
6 May my tongue cleave to my palate, if I do not remember thee,
If I set not Jerusalem higher than the chief of my joys.[o]

Prayer for judgment upon the Edomites

7 Remember, O Jehovah, the day of Jerusalem against the sons of Edom,
Who said, 'Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to the foundation with it!'
8 Happy he who repayeth thee the deed thou hast done to us;
Happy he who taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rocks.

IV

PETITIONS FOR VINDICATION AND RESTORATION

Pss. 26, 27[7-12], 41, 67, 122, 86, 88, 102[1-11, 22-27], 123

§ 156. Petition That Innocence May Be Vindicated, Ps. 26

Protestation of innocence

Ps. 26 1 Judge me, O Jehovah,
For I, indeed, have walked in mine integrity,
And in Jehovah have I trusted without wavering.
2 Test me, O Jehovah, and prove me,
Try my heart and my mind.

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§ 155 The two chief notes in this ps. are loyalty to Jehovah and imprecations upon Israel's foes who are represented by the Edomites, that Arab people who by the days of Nehemiah had occupied the territory of southern Judah and were pressing the Jewish community on its southern border. Briggs may be right in his contention that *Babylon* in the first line is secondary, for it, like the following Heb. word *there*, is superfluous both from the point of view of metre and the demands of the context. It is again inserted in [8], where it is clearly secondary as well as the untranslatable word which follows. The phrase *in her midst*, in [2], tends to support, however, the presence of the word Babylon in [1]. Its presence there is also consistent with the retrospect of the distant past in [1-4]. It also explains why the scribe inserted *daughter of Babylon* in [8]. The Bab. exile lies so far away from the poet's horizon that it is probable that he did not write before the middle of the Persian period. In later generations, and especially in the early stages of the Maccabean struggle, Jewish hostility to the Edomites increased rather than diminished. The imprecatory spirit of this ps. also finds its closest parallels in the hymns of this later period. The same inference may be drawn from the intense loyalty to Jerusalem expressed in the second stanza. The grim beatitudes at the end of the ps. furnish a striking contrast with those that fell from the lips of the great Teacher of Nazareth.

k 137[2] Transferring the superfluous *there*, cf. [1], to [2], where it completes the measure.

l 137[3] Slightly revising the untranslatable Heb. text and translating the Heb. word which means *joy* as the parallelism suggests.

m 137[4] Lit., *song of Jehovah*.

n 137[5] So Gk. and Lat. Heb., *forget*.

o 137[6] Lit., *head of my joy*.

§ 156 The two distinctive elements in this ps. are the presence of malicious persecutors, apparently within the Jewish community itself, and the psalmist's devotion to the temple and its services; both point to the second half or middle of the Persian period.

3 Verily thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes,
And I walk in the light of thy truth.[a]
4 I do not sit down with men who are false,
Neither do I associate[b] with dissemblers.
5 I hate the society of evil-doers,
And I do not sit down in the company of the wicked.

Of devotion to the temple and its service

6 I wash my hands in innocency,
And I march around thine altar, O Jehovah,
7 To make heard the voice of thanksgiving,
And to tell all thy wondrous works.
8 I love[c] the habitation of thy house,
The place where thy glory dwelleth.

Prayer to be kept from sin

9 Gather not my soul with sinners,[d]
Nor my life with men of blood,
10 In whose hands is a malignant design,
And whose right hand is full of bribery;
11 For I, indeed, walk in mine integrity,
Redeem me, O Jehovah,[e] and be gracious to me.
12 My foot doth stand in a level place;[f]
In the assemblies will I bless Jehovah.

§ 157. Prayer for Help in Time of Need, Ps. 27[7-13]

Hear me

Ps. 27 7 Hear, O Jehovah, my cry,
When I call[g] be gracious to me and answer me.
8 When thou sayest, 'Seek my face,'[h]
Thy face, O Jehovah, do I seek.

Hide me

9 Hide not thy face from me,
Put not thy servant away in anger.
Thou art my help, do not abandon me,
And do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
10 My father and my mother have forsaken me,
But Jehovah taketh me up.

Guide me

11 Teach me thy way, O Jehovah,
And lead me in a path that is plain.[i]
12 Give me not over to the will of mine adversaries,

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[a] 26[3] Lit., *in thy truth* or *faithfulness*.
[b] 26[4] Lit., *go in with*.
[c] 26[8] Heb. adds *O Jehovah*.
[d] 26[9] *I. e.*, do not take my life prematurely.
[e] 26[11] So Gk. Heb. omits *Jehovah*.
[f] 26[12] *I. e.*, in the level court of the temple area as the next line indicates.
§ 157 There are no definite indications of the date of this ps. It probably comes from the first half of the Persian period. Cf., for [1-4], § 104.
[g] 27[7] So Gk. and Syr. Heb. adds an unnecessary *and*.
[h] 27[8] The text of this line is badly mutilated, but it is possible to restore what was clearly the original text.
[i] 27[11] The scribe has added *for the sake of mine adversaries;* but this is inconsistent both with the metre and with the context.

For false witnesses have risen up against me,[j]
And they breathe out violence against me.

§ 158. Petition That Jehovah Will Restore and Vindicate His Servant, Ps. 41

Invocation of Jehovah's help in need

Ps. 41 [1]Happy is he who acteth wisely, though weak and needy;[k]
In the day of evil may Jehovah deliver him,
[2]May Jehovah preserve and quicken him in the land,[l]
And may he[m] not give him over to the greed of his enemies.
[3]May Jehovah support him on his couch of illness,
May he[n] wholly transform his bed of sickness.
[4]I myself say, 'Be gracious to me, O Jehovah;
Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.'

The malicious, treacherous attacks of foes

[5]Mine enemies say it is bad with me:
'How long ere he die, and his name perish.'
[6]Even if one cometh to see me, he speaketh falsehood;
His mind gathereth iniquity to itself,
As soon as he goeth abroad, he speaketh it [7]altogether.
Against me all who hate me whisper,
Against me they devise how they may do harm to me:
[8]'A deadly thing is poured out within him,
And now that he has lain down, he will never rise again.'
[9]Even mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted,
Who hath broken bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Jehovah alone can vindicate his servants

[10]But thou, O Jehovah, be gracious to me, and raise me up;[o]
[11]By this I shall know that thou delightest in me,
That mine enemy will not shout in triumph over me,
[12]But as for me, in mine integrity thou holdest me fast,
And thou wilt set me before thy face forever.[p]

§ 159. Prayer for Prosperity, Ps. 67

Bless thy people with prosperity

Ps. 67 [1]Jehovah be gracious to us and bless us,
And cause his face to shine upon us,

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[j] 27[12] Slightly restoring the text as the context and metre require. To the original ps. a new editor or scribe has added the following prose lines, *Unless I had believed to see the goodness of Jehovah in the land of the living. . . . Wait on Jehovah, be strong, and let thy heart be firm and wait on Jehovah.*

§ 158 It is evident that this is a personal rather than a national song. It is probably one of the many of similar tenor which come from the first part of the Persian period.

[k] 41[1] Following the suggestion of the Gk., which adds *needy* in reconstructing the text.

[l] 41[2] Heb. adds *make him happy*. Possibly this is original, although the absence of the connective *and* suggests that this one of the three verbs in the line was added by a later scribe.

[m] 41[2] Following the VSS. in correcting an obvious error in the Heb.

[n] 41[3] Translating the Heb., which reads *thou hast changed all his bed in his illness*, as the parallelism demands.

[o] 41[10] Heb. adds *and I will repay them*. Possibly this is a fragment of a line that has been otherwise lost, but more probably it is a scribal addition.

[p] 41[12] This ps., standing at the end of the first Davidic collection, has appended to it the doxology:

Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
From everlasting unto everlasting. Amen and amen.

§ 159 This prayer is based on the promise of Lev. 26^{3-9} and its opening vss. are a paraphrase of the priestly blessing in Nu. 6^{24-26}. The broad missionary note relates this hymn of mingled

²That thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy saving power among all the nations.

³Let the peoples give thee thanks, O Jehovah,
Let all the peoples give thee thanks.
⁴Let the nations be glad and shout for joy,
For thou governest the peoples with equity,
And guidest the nations upon earth.

⁵Let the peoples give thee thanks, O Jehovah,
Let all the peoples give thee thanks.
⁶The earth hath yielded her increase,
Jehovah, our God, doth bless us;
⁷May[q] all the ends of the earth fear him.

§ 160. Prayer for the Peace and Prosperity of Jerusalem, Ps. 122

122 ¹I am glad when they say to me: 'We are going to the house of
…ovah.'
…d when our[r] feet are standing within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

…lem that art again built up, as a city that is compacted together;
…the tribes go up, the tribes of Jehovah,[s] to give thanks to his[t] name.
…stand the thrones for judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

…eace be to Jerusalem, and prosperity[u] to those who love thee.
…within thy ramparts, and prosperity within thy palaces.'
…sake of my brethren and my friends, I say: 'Peace be within thee.'
…sake of the house of Jehovah our God, I will seek thy prosperity.

§ 161. Appeal to Jehovah for Guidance and Help, Ps. 86

86 ¹Incline thine ear, O Jehovah,
Answer me for I am afflicted and poor,
²O keep my life, for I am pious,

…on and thanksgiving to Zech. 8 and Is. 40–50. Vs. 6 indicates that its background is a time …sperity, when the Jews stood on a friendly attitude toward the heathen. It comes either … the days following Nehemiah or from the early Gk. period. The refrain is found at the be-…ng of the second and third stanzas.

q 67⁷ Heb. repeats *Jehovah will bless us*, but it is incongruous with the prevailing strophic …sure and is probably secondary.

§ 160 This beautiful pilgrim ps. is written in the unusual six-beat measure. Like most of … pilgrim pss., it comes from the Gk. period.

r 122² Syr., *my feet*.

s 122⁴ Heb. adds *as is prescribed to Israel*.

t 122⁴ Heb., *to Jehovah's name*.

u 122⁶ So Gk.

§ 161 This ps. has been described *as colorless, lifeless, and void of all originality*. It certainly …cks unity and vigor. Its ideas are chiefly drawn from the prophetic books and earlier pss. It …lso lacks the carefully developed metrical parallelism that characterizes most pss. Its depend…nce upon Jonah, cf., *e. g.*, 5. 15 and Jon. 4², and upon other late O.T. books suggests that it was …ritten by a person in sympathy with the forerunners of the Hasideans who lived late in the Gk. …r early in the Maccabean period.

Save thy servant who trusteth in thee.
Thou art[v] my God, 3be gracious to me,[w]
For unto thee do I call all the day.
4Make glad the soul of thy servant,
For to thee[x] do I lift up my soul,
5For thou, O Lord, art good and forgiving,
And abounding in mercy to all who call upon thee.
6Give ear, O Jehovah, to my prayer,
And heed to the voice of my supplication.

Thou alone art supreme

7I call upon thee in distress,[y] for thou answerest me.
8There is none equal to thee among the gods,
O Lord, there are no works like thy works.
9All the nations whom thou hast made will come,
And will bow down before thee, O Lord,
And will glorify thy name.
10For thou art great and a doer of wonders,
Thou alone art God.

Let me be assured of thy protection and care

11Teach me, O Jehovah, thy way,
That I may walk in thy truth alone;
Let my heart rejoice[z] in fearing thy name.
12I will thank thee, O Lord,[a] with my whole heart,
And I will magnify thy name forever;
13For great is thy lovingkindness toward me,
Thou hast delivered me[b] out of the depths of Sheol.
14O God, the insolent rise up against me,
And the mob of violent men seek my life,
Thee they have not set before their eyes.
15But thou art a God[c] pitying and gracious,
Long-suffering and abounding in mercy and truth.
16Turn toward me and be gracious to me,
And give thy strength to thy servant,
Deliver the son of thy maid-servant.
17Work in my behalf a favorable sign,[d]
That my haters may see with shame,[e]
That thou dost aid and comfort me, O Jehovah.

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[v] 86[3] Transferring the words *thou art my God* from the preceding line, where they are metrically superfluous, to this line, where they are demanded by the metre.
[w] 86[3] Certain MSS. read *Jehovah* at the end of this line. Trad. Heb., *my God*. The variations as well as the measure suggest that both are secondary.
[x] 86[4] Again the Heb. texts present the variant readings *Lord* and *Jehovah*.
[y] 86[7] Heb., *day of distress*.
[z] 86[11] Following the Gk. and Syr.
[a] 86[12] Omitting the unmetrical *my God*.
[b] 86[13] Lit., *my soul*.
[c] 86[15] Heb., *Lord*.
[d] 86[17] Lit., *a sign for good, i. e.*, give some sign of thy favor that will convince my enemies.
[e] 86[17] Lit., *and be filled with shame*.

§ 162. A Prayer for Deliverance from Impending Death, Ps. 88

Cry for deliverance

Ps. 88 1 Jehovah, I cry for help[f] by day,
I cry at night before thee.
2 Let my prayer enter into thy presence;
Incline thine ear unto my wailing,
3 For my soul is filled with trouble,
And my life draweth nigh to Sheol.
4 I am counted with those who go down to the grave,[g]
I am like a man who hath no help,
5 Cast off and among the dead,[h]
Like the slain who lie in the grave,
Whom thou rememberest no more,
Even those who are cut off from thy hand.
6 In the lowest pit thou hast placed me,
In dark places, in deepest gloom.
7 Thy wrath resteth heavily upon me,
And all thy breakers thou hast brought[i] upon me.
8 Thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me,
Thou hast made me an abomination to them,
I am shut up so that I cannot come forth.
9 Mine eyes are wasted by affliction;
I call upon thee daily, O Jehovah,
To thee I spread forth my hands.

Already it is almost too late

10 Wilt thou work a miracle for the dead?
Shall the shades arise and praise thee?
11 Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave?
Or thy faithfulness in the realm of destruction?
12 Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?
And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

Why does God seemingly abandon his servant

13 But to thee, O Jehovah, I cry for help,
And in the morning my prayer cometh before thee.
14 Why, O Jehovah, dost thou reject me?
Why dost thou hide from me thy face?
15 Afflicted and ready to die from my youth,[j]

---

§ 162 Delitzsch has rightly described this as the gloomiest of all the plaintive pss. It has affinities with Job, but the problem is physical, not moral. Imprisoned, [8], deserted by friends, the poet faces death, and he frankly confesses that he is appalled by its terrors. Does the abrupt ending mean that the grim messenger of darkness stayed his hand. As a national hymn it was well fitted to describe the agony of the early Maccabean era.

[f] 88[1] With Duhm and others slightly revising the Heb., which reads, *O Jehovah the God of my salvation*.

[g] 88[4] Lit., *pit; i. e.*, I am regarded as practically dead.

[h] 88[5] Heb. is evidently corrupt; the VSS. give little help. The above is based on a conjectural emendation that is in harmony with the context.

[i] 88[7] So Gk., Syr., and Lat. RV translates Heb., *thou hast afflicted me*.

[j] 88[15] Or, emending with Duhm, *from affliction*.

I suffer thy terrors, I am turned back.[k]
16 The fires of thy wrath have gone over me;
Thy terrors have cut me off completely,
17 They like water surround me all day long;
They all beset me together.
18 Lover and friend hast thou put far from me,[l]
And darkness alone is mine acquaintance!

§ 163. Prayer of an Afflicted Suppliant, Ps. 102[1-11, 23-27]

Cry for divine help

Ps. 102 1 Hear my prayer, O Jehovah,
And let my cry for help come to thee.
2 Hide not from me thy face,
In the day of my distress hasten to me,[m]
Incline thine ear unto me,
In the day when I call, answer me.

Peril of the suppliant

3 For my days vanish away like[n] smoke,
And my bones are burned like a brand.
4 My heart is smitten like grass,[o]
For I forget to eat my bread.
5 By reason of the sound of my groaning,
My bone doth cleave to my flesh.

Lonely and derided

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness;
I am become as an owl of the wastes;
7 I watch, and am become like a falcon,[p]
A bird alone upon a housetop.
8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day;
Those who are mad against[q] me curse by me.

Disconsolate

9 Yea, I eat ashes like bread,
And mix my drink with weeping,
10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath,

---

[k] 88[15] Gk., Lat., and Syr. translate the three Heb. words in this line by three verbs. Following this suggestion, Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 248) reads, *I endure, I am brought low, I am turned backward.* In any case these VSS. are our best guide in interpreting the otherwise unknown final Heb. verb.

[l] 88[18] Briggs transposes after the analogy of [8a] so as to read, *thou hast removed from me mine acquaintance.*

§ 163 This is appropriately described in its superscription as *a prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his complaint before Jehovah.* The sequel to [11] is found in [24-27], to which has been added [23] by an editor, who, quoting from the song of Hezekiah in Is. 38[10], sought to weld together the two pss. The gloss is a weak repetition of the thought of [11], *He hath brought down my strength in the way; he hath shortened my days.* Vs. [24] is also introduced by, *I say, O my God.* The logical connection of this last stanza is close, for it suggests Jehovah's power to deliver. Originally this ps. appears to have voiced the psalmist's personal experience, although it was equally well fitted to express the feelings of the Jews during the first part of the Persian or the Maccabean periods.

[m] 102[2] Heb. has only *to me*, but the implied verb has, through a scribal error, been transferred to the end of the vs., where it is superfluous.

[n] 102[3] So Gk., Lat., and Targ. Heb., *in.*

[o] 102[4] Heb. adds, destroying the metre, *and withered.*

[p] 102[7] So Syr. Heb. has lost the final word.

[q] 102[8] Or *who pierce.*

For thou hast taken me up, and cast me away.
11My days are like a shadow stretched out,[r]
And like the grass I wither.

Jehovah's power to deliver

24Take me not away in the midst of my days;
Thy years are throughout all generations.
25Of old didst thou lay the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the work of thy hands.
26They will perish, but thou wilt endure;
All of them will wear out like a garment,
As a vesture wilt thou change them, and they will be changed;
27But thou, Jehovah,[s] art the same,
Thy years have no end.

§ 164. An Expectant Prayer for Divine Help, Ps. 123

The attitude of expectancy

Ps. 123 1I lift up mine eyes to thee who art enthroned in the heavens.
2Behold, as the eyes of servants look to their master's hand,
As the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress,
So are our eyes to Jehovah, our God, until he is gracious to us.
3Be gracious to us, O Jehovah, be gracious to us, for we are[t] filled with contempt.
4Our soul is exceedingly filled[u] with the contempt of the proud.

V

PRAYERS FOR JEHOVAH'S FORGIVENESS AND FAVOR

Pss. 38, 51, 85, 39, 90

§ 165. Cry to Jehovah for Deliverance from Disease and Disgrace, Ps. 38

Jehovah's judgment

Ps. 38 1O Jehovah, rebuke me not in thy wrath,
Neither chasten me in thy hot anger;
2For thine arrows have pierced me home,
And thy hand resteth heavily upon me.[a]
3There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation,
There is no health in my bones because of my sins.[b]
4For mine iniquities have mounted over my head,
My burden is too heavy for me to bear.

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[r] 102[11] *I. e.*, as a symbol of the declining day.
[s] 102[27] Supplying the *Jehovah* demanded by the parallelism.
§ 164 This little ps. clearly comes from the latter part of the Gk. or the earlier days of the Maccabean period. *The proud* in [4] are probably the apostate high priests and their supporters.
[t] 123[3] Heb. adds *exceedingly*, probably under the influence of the next line.
[u] 123[4] A scribe has expanded this line by adding *with the scorn of those without care*.
§ 165 This has all the marks of an individual ps. It is closely parallel in thought to many of the other pss. that come from the earlier part of the Persian period.
[a] 38[2] Possibly the text should be emended so as to read, *thy hand is heavy upon me*.
[b] 38[3] So Gk., Syr., and Sym.

5My wounds stink and fester;
Because of my foolishness, 6I am bent down;
Yea, I am greatly bowed down,
I go about in mourning all the day long.
7For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease,
And there is no soundness in my flesh,
8I am benumbed and greatly crushed,
I growl as a lion[c] growleth.
9O Lord, all my desire is before thee,
And my sighing is not hid from thee.

The terrible affliction

10My heart palpitateth, my strength faileth me;
The light of mine eye is also gone[d] from me.
11My lovers and my friends stand aloof,
Even my neighbors stand afar off,[e]
12And they who seek my life lay snares for me,
They who seek my hurt, speak of ruin,
And they utter deceitful things all the day long.[f]
13But I am as a deaf man who heareth not,
And as a dumb man who openeth not his mouth.[g]

Discouraged, abandoned by friends, and attacked by foes

15For in thee, O Jehovah, do I hope;
Thou wilt answer,[h] O my God,
16Lest[i] mine enemies rejoice over me.
When my foot slippeth, they do great things against me;
17For I indeed am ready to halt,
And my sorrow is continually before me.[j]
19For those who hate me without cause are strong;
And those who hate me wrongfully are many.
20They who render evil for good are mine adversaries,
Because I follow that which is good.[k]
21Forsake me not, O Jehovah,
O my God, be not far from me,
22Make haste to help me,[l] O my salvation.

Jehovah his only hope

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[c] 38[8] Slightly revising the Heb. text.
[d] 38[10] So the Gk. and the demands of the context.
[e] 38[11] Reconstructing the corrupt Heb. with the aid of the Gk. and the context.
[f] 38[12] Possibly this line is secondary.
[g] 38[13] A scribe has added a repetitious couplet:

And I am as a man who doth not hear,
And there is no reproof in his mouth.

[h] 38[15] A scribe has added, in the Heb., *Lord*.
[i] 38[16] So Gk. and the demands of the context. Through a scribal corruption the Heb. reads, *for I said*.
[j] 38[17] The following liturgical note has been added, although it is not in harmony with the context, *for I make known my iniquity, I am sorry for my sin*.
[k] 38[20] Possibly this line is corrupt. Certain Gk. MSS. have a widely different reading.
[l] 38[22] The Heb. adds *Lord*.

§ 166. Plea for Complete Forgiveness and Restoration to Divine Favor, Ps. 51

Plea for complete forgiveness

Ps. 51 1Have mercy upon me, O Jehovah,[m] according to thy lovingkindness,
According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions;[n]
2Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And from my sin do thou cleanse me.

Confession of sin

3For I myself acknowledge[o] my transgressions,
And my sin is continually before me.
4[I confess], 'Against thee alone have I sinned,[p]
And done what is evil in thy sight;
That thou mayest be justified in thy sentence,[q]
That thou mayest be without fault in thy judgment.'
5Behold I was brought forth[r] in iniquity,
And in sin did my mother conceive me.

Prayer for moral cleansing

6Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts,[s]
And in the hidden part thou wouldst make me know wisdom.
7Purify me with hyssop[t] that I may be clean,
Wash me that I may be whiter than snow.
8Satisfy[u] me with joy and gladness,

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§ 166 The title, *A Psalm of David; when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba*, has confirmed in the minds of many readers the Davidic authorship of this ps. There is little, however, in II Sam. or the ps. itself to support this conjecture of a later editor. If David's repentance had been as profound as that of the psalmist, Israel's history would have been very different. The ps., on the other hand, represents not the crude beginnings but the maturity of Israel's religion. The great ideas of both I and II Is. pervade it. Cf., *e. g.*, $^{2, 3, 7}$ and Is. 1^{18}, vs. ^{4} and Is. 59^{12}, vs. ^{9} and Is. $51^{3, 11}$, vs. ^{12} and Is. $63^{10, 11}$, vss. $^{14-15}$ and Is. 43^{27}, 54^{1-8}. The language and the theology are those of the middle of the Persian period. Its deep sense of sin is characteristic of the exilic and post-exilic literature. It has much in common with Nehemiah's prayer in Neh. 1. Whether, as seems probable, $^{18, 19}$ represent a later appendix or not, the original ps. antedates 445 B.C., when the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. A date between 500 and 445 B.C. fully satisfies the implications contained in the ps.

[m] 51^{1} Restoring the original *Jehovah*, which has been changed to *Elohim* throughout the group in which this ps. is found.

[n] 51^{1} Gk., *my transgression*. The Heb. word refers to deliberate sins.

[o] 51^{3} The Heb. verb describes a continued state of feeling.

[p] 51^{4} The ordinary rendering of this vs. expresses just the opposite of what the psalmist clearly meant. His frank and full confession of his sins was in order that Jehovah might be justified in forgiving him.

[q] 51^{4} Gk., Syr., and Lat., *in thy words*.

[r] 51^{5} If the ps. is individual the psalmist evidently here refers not to any specific sin of his immediate ancestor but to the fact that he was born a member of the sinful human race. If the ps. is national the reference evidently is to the sinful origin of the nation as developed, for example, in Ezek. 16.

[s] 51^{6} This line is overfull and the meaning of the phrase translated, *in the inward parts*, is doubtful. Possibly the word which follows is but a scribal interpretation of the preceding. The current translation, however, which has been followed, is supported by the Targums and is in keeping with the spiritual content of the ps. Emending the text, Briggs translates this:

Behold in faithfulness thou dost delight,
The confidence of wisdom thou makest me know.

(*Pss.*, II, 3). Duhm revises more radically and translates the vs.:

Behold, thou lovest truth more than concealment,
And instructest me regarding hidden wisdom.

[t] 51^{7} Hyssop was used in the ceremonial cleansing of a leper, according to the law of Lev. $14^{4, 6, 49}$, and in cleansing one who had come in contact with the dead, Nu. $19^{6, 18}$.

[u] 51^{8} So Syr. and correcting one letter in the Heb. The current rendering, *Let me hear*, is not supported by the context.

Let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice;
9 Hide thy face from my sins,[v]
And blot out all mine iniquities.
10 Create for me a clean heart, O Jehovah,
And renew a steadfast[w] spirit within me.

For restoration to Jehovah's favor

11 Cast me not away from thy presence,
And take not thy holy spirit[x] from me.
12 Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,
That a willing spirit may ever uphold me.

Vow of service

13 Then I will teach transgressors thy ways,
That sinners may turn unto thee.
14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness,[y] O Jehovah,[z]
Let my tongue sing aloud of thy righteousness.
15 O Lord, open thou my lips,
That my mouth may declare thy praise.

The acceptable sacrifice

16 For thou delightest not in sacrifice,
And should I give[a] a whole burnt-offering, thou wouldst not accept it.
17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
A crushed[b] heart, O Jehovah, thou wilt not despise.

Prayer for the restoration of Jerusalem

18 Do good in thy good pleasure to Zion;
Mayest thou rebuild the walls of Jerusalem;
19 Then thou wilt delight in peace-offerings and whole burnt-offerings,[c]
Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

§ 167. Jehovah's Gracious Care for His People, Ps. 85

In the past

Ps. 85 1 Jehovah, thou wast favorable to thy land,
Thou broughtest back the captivity of[d] Jacob.
2 Thou forgivest the iniquity of thy people,

---

[v] 51[9] *I. e.*, overlook and pardon.
[w] 51[10] Cf., for the origin of this figure, Ezek. 11[19], 36[26].
[x] 51[11] One of the early O.T. examples of the use of the term holy spirit, *i. e.*, the spirit of God, the Holy One. Cf. Is. 63[10, 11] for the only other O.T. passages in which the term occurs.
[y] 51[14] *I. e.*, mortal sins.
[z] 51[14] Heb., *God*. This is followed by a scribal addition, *God of my salvation*, a phrase which is clearly out of harmony with the metrical structure of the ps.
[a] 51[16] Transposing this last clause to the last line as is demanded by the metrical structure of the vs. and by the context.
[b] 51[17] A scribe has repeated a synonym of the word *crushed* or *broken*, but the metrical structure of the vs. clearly reveals its secondary character.
[c] 51[19] This line has evidently been expanded by a later scribe. In its present Heb. form it reads, *then thou shalt be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, burnt-offering, and whole-burnt offering*. Possibly *burnt-offering and whole-burnt offering* is secondary. Vss. [18, 19] contradict the thought in [16] and are in all probability a Maccabean addition.
§ 167 The poet who wrote this exquisite ps. looked back upon the restoration from exile as ancient history. The return of prosperity in the days of Nehemiah was the evidence of the forgiveness of Israel's sins, [2, 3]. Dark clouds again lower on the horison, [4, 5]. These suggest the closing years of the Persian or else the Gk. period.
[d] 85[1] Or *restored the prosperity of.*

All their sins thou didst cover.
3Thou didst take away all thy wrath,
Thou didst turn away the heat of thine anger.

Petition for pardon and deliverance

4Turn to us, O God of our salvation,
And cause thy displeasure against us to cease.[e]
5Wilt thou forever be angry against us?
Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?
6Wilt thou not quicken us again,
That thy people may rejoice in thee?
7Show us thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah,
And to us grant thy salvation.

Assurance that Jehovah will give his good gifts

8I would hear what God[f] will speak;
Verily he will speak peace to his people,
To his pious ones and those who turn their hearts to him.[g]
9Surely his salvation is nigh those who fear him,
That glory may dwell in our land.
10Kindness and truth are met together,
Righteousness and peace kiss each other.
11Truth springeth out of the earth,
And righteousness looketh down from heaven.
12Jehovah will also give that which is good,
And our land will yield its increase.
13Righteousness will go before him,
And peace[h] will walk in his footsteps.

§ 168. Uncertainty and Brevity of Human Life, Ps. 39

The shortness of man's life

Ps. 39 1I said, I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue,
I will put[i] a muzzle on my mouth while the wicked are in my presence.
2I was dumb and silent,[j] but comfortless,[k] and my grief was stirred;
3My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue, 4" O Jehovah, make me know mine end.
And what is the measure of my days, that I may know[l] how frail I am.

---

[e] 85⁴ Lit., *cause to break off, render ineffectual.*
[f] 85⁸ Heb. adds *Jehovah*, but this destroys the measure.
[g] 85⁸ So Gk. and Lat., which suggest the original order of the disarranged Heb. letters.
[h] 85¹³ Emending the Heb. as the context suggests.
§ 168 This ps. is a noble elegy written in the emotional five-beat measure. It deals with the ever-insistent problem of the suffering of the innocent. The poem contributes to its solution the thought that man's problems, after all, are insignificant compared with God's eternity. The problem is not merely abstract but was evidently presented concretely to the mind of the poet as the result of his own pain and affliction. It may have been written before the days of Nehemiah but probably in the Gk. period.
[i] 39¹ Slightly correcting what appears to have been a scribal error.
[j] 39² The Heb. adds *I held my peace.* But this appears to be a repetition of the preceding vs. and destroys the metrical structure.
[k] 39² Lit., *from good.*
[l] 39⁴ Possibly this verb is a scribal addition. In the above translation the reading of certain MSS., which add the conjunction, is followed.

5 Behold thou hast made my days as a handbreath, my lifetime is as nothing.
Before thee verily[m] every man standeth but as vapor.

6 Surely as a semblance man walketh about, as vapor he is disquieted. — **Pity and deliver finite man**
He heapeth up riches and he knoweth not who shall gather them.
7 And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? my hope is in thee;
8 From all my transgressions deliver me, make me not the reproach of impious fools.
9 I am dumb, I open not my mouth, because thou hast done it.
10 Remove thy stroke from off me; I am consumed by thy might.[n]
11 When with rebukes thou dost correct a mortal man because of iniquity,
As a moth thou destroyest his beauty; yea, every man is but as vapor.

12 Hear, O Jehovah, my prayer, and give ear to my cry. — **Heed my prayer**
Hold not thy peace at the tears which I shed,[o]
For I am thy guest, a sojourner, as were all my forefathers.
13 Oh spare me, that I may take heart again before I depart and be no more.'[p]

§ 169. Prayer That God the Infinite May Be Gracious to Finite Man, Ps. 90

Ps. 90 1 O Lord,[q] thou hast been[r] in all generations; — **God's eternal character**
2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or the earth and the land were born,[s]
From everlasting to everlasting[t] thou art God.

3 Thou turnest man to dust,[u] — **Man's frailty and finiteness**
And sayest, 'Return, ye sons of men.'
4 For a thousand years in thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.[v]

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[m] 39[5] Slightly correcting the Heb., which repeats the *all* twice in the line. The meaning of the vs. seems to be that finite man is, in the sight of God, but a passing vapor.

[n] 39[10] Following the Gk. Lit., *by the might of thy hand.*

[o] 39[12] Heb. has simply *at my tears.*

[p] 39[13] This line is based on Job 10[20, 21].

§ 169 This ps. bears the striking title, *A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God*, probably suggested by the reminders of the opening chapters of Gen. in [1, 2] and by its majestic spirit. Like many of the hymns of the Psalter, it grew out of deep personal experience; but vss. [13-17] show that it was originally written to express the feelings of the Jewish community. Possibly, however, an older individual ps. is to be found in [1-12]. If so, [13-17] contain a later appendix, intended to adapt it to use in public worship. In any case a satisfactory background is found for the ps. in the latter part of the Gk. period, when writers, like the author of Ecc., were meditating on the significance of life. The strong didactic purpose and the wisdom point of view revealed in the ps. confirm this dating.

[q] 90[1] As has been pointed out by many commentators, the phrase *our dwelling place*, which is found in the standard Heb. text, obscures the thought of this opening stanza. It was probably introduced from 91[9]. Certain Gk. MSS., influenced by 91[2], read *stronghold*, indicating that the text was uncertain. The present Heb. reads:

O Lord, thou art our dwelling place,
Thou art ours in all generations.

[r] 90[1] *I. e.*, thou art eternal.

[s] 90[2] So Gk., Syr., Targ., Aquila, and Syr., supported by the context. *I. e.*, the dry land was separated from the waters. Cf. Gen. 1. Heb., *thou hadst formed.*

[t] 90[2] Cheyne, *from æon to æon.* Certain interpreters would transpose this and the following vs. The parallelism with [5, 6] supports the present order. It is a striking example of enveloping parallelism.

[u] 90[3] Not *destruction*, as in the current translations.

[v] 90[4] This two-beat line may be secondary.

Brevity of his life

5 Thou sowest[w] them year by year;
They are like grass which groweth up in the morning,
6 In the morning it blossometh and groweth up,
In the evening it fadeth and withereth.

Tragic fatal effects of his sins

7 For we are consumed in thine anger,
And by thy wrath we are filled with dismay.
8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
Our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
9 For all our days do decline,[x]
In thy wrath we bring our years to an end.

Sad and sorrowful his days

10 As a sigh are the days of our years,
In them are threescore years and ten,
And, if one be strong, fourscore years;[y]
Yet is their duration[z] but labor and sorrow,
For it is soon gone, and we fly away.

May God instruct his children

11 Who knoweth the strength of thine anger,[a]
And who beholdeth thy wrath?
12 So teach us to number our days,[b]
That we may get a mind that is wise.[c]

And show them his mercy and favor

13 Relent,[d] O Jehovah! How long?
And take pity again on thy servants.
14 Oh satisfy us in the morning with thy lovingkindness,
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
15 Make us glad according to the days thou hast afflicted us,
And the years wherein we have seen evil.
16 Let thy work be revealed to thy servants,
And thy glory unto their children.
17 May thy favor, O Lord,[e] be upon us;
And establish thou the work of our hands.[f]

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[w] 90[5] Following a suggestion of the Gk., which is strongly supported by the context. Cf. Haupt, Journ. of Bib. Lit., XXXI, Pt. III, 115, 116, who reads, ***Thou bringest them into being each year***, lit., ***thou hast gendered***. The current rendering, ***Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as sleep***, makes no sense and is a loose translation of the Heb. The consonants of the Heb. word for ***year*** and ***sleep*** are the same. Gk. and Syr. retain the original ***year***.

[x] 90[9] So Briggs, *Pss.*, II, 271.

[y] 90[10] This division of the vs. improves the parallelism, metre, and thought.

[z] 90[10] Lit., ***breadth***. A revised text gives the reading ***most of them***.

[a] 90[11] Following the Gk. supported by the parallelism. The current translation, ***and thy wrath according to the fear that is due thee***, is simply an awkward attempt to extract a meaning from the corrupt Heb. text.

[b] 90[12] Or, with Haupt, ***make us know accurately how to number our days***.

[c] 90[12] Lit., with Syr., Aquila, and Sym., ***enter into a heart of wisdom***.

[d] 90[13] Lit., ***turn***.

[e] 90[17] Certain MSS. read, simply, ***favor of Jehovah***. Heb. adds ***our God***. The metre and the remarkable symmetry of this ps. confirm the conclusion that it originally read as above.

[f] 90[17] So certain Heb. MSS. and Gk. The Heb. adds ***upon us, and the work of our hands establish it***. This awkward addition is clearly due to the error of a scribe.

REFLECTIVE AND DIDACTIC PSALMS

I. THE LESSONS OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY REGARDING JEHOVAH'S CHARACTER AND DEMANDS

Dt. 32^{1-43}, Ps. 78, 106, 77, 81^{7-16}, 127, 144^{12-15}

II. THE VALUE OF THE LAW

Ps. 19^{7-14}, 119

III. THE PROPHETIC STANDARDS OF RIGHT AND WRONG

Ps. 15, 36^{1-4}, 50

IV. THE FATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

Ps. 14 (53), 32, 37, 49, 34, 52, 1, 91, 112, 73, 82, 94, 125, 128, 133

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REFLECTIVE AND DIDACTIC PSALMS

I

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Dt. 32^{1-43}, Ps. 78, 106, 77, 81^{7-16}, 127, 144^{12-15}

§ 170. Jehovah's Justice and Fidelity Revealed in Israel's History, Dt. 32^{1-43}

Exordium: Jehovah's greatness

Dt. 32 1 Give heed, O heavens, as I speak,
And let the earth hear my words;
2 Let my teaching drop as the rain,
Let my speech distil as the dew,
As the mist upon the growing grass,
And as showers descend upon the vegetation.
3 For I proclaim the renown of Jehovah,
To our God supreme majesty ascribe.

Jehovah's fidelity and Israel's infidelity

4 The Rock[a]—his work is perfect;
For all his acts are justice;
A God of faithfulness and without deceit,[b]
Just and upright is he.

The Reflective and Didactic Psalms.—The sages speak in this group of pss., which might properly be classified with the other wisdom writings, such as Pr., B. Sir., and Job. Here the didactic purpose of the psalmist is clearly revealed. The wise teachers of old Israel realized that what men sang under the influence of deep emotion sank deepest into their consciousness. Plato voiced the same when he declared, *the character of the people depends so much more upon their songs than upon anything else that we ought to make these the chief forces in education.*

§ 170 In this vigorous hymn the thoughts of the prophets and sages mingle. Such passages as [39] and [43] indicate that the author lived very nearly if not quite contemporaneously with the author of Is. 40–55. Like the author of those immortal poems, the psalmist studies the past to learn the lessons which it taught regarding Jehovah's attitude toward his people and their obligations to him. History, in the poet's mind, is but an illustration of Jehovah's character and ways of dealing with men. The resemblance in general theme between this ps. and 78 and 105 is close. Its style is vigorous. It contains many ideas and figures taken from Am., Hos., and Ezek. Its prevailing expressions are those which characterize the writings of Jer. and Ezek. It certainly is not earlier than the period of Judah's decline. The prominence of the reflective, wisdom motif suggests a later date. Vss. [30-33] may refer to the Assyr. invasion but they find their natural background in the period of the Bab. exile. The foes are probably the Edomites and Ammonites, who improved the hours of Judah's humiliations to pay off old scores. The hope that Jehovah will soon rise in judgment finds its closest analogies in the prophecies of Hag. and Zech., so that the ps. is probably to be dated in the first half of the Persian period. The prologue, 31^{22}, and the epilogue, 32^{44}, preserve the late tradition that Moses was the author of this ps. Probably the tradition that associated it with Moses is responsible for its place in the book of Deuteronomy.

[a] 32^{4} A common designation of the Deity. Cf. [15, 18, 30, 31, 37] and II Sam. 23^{3} and often in pss. It is the symbol of his unchanging character ever present as a protection and refuge for his people. *Great Rock* was also a title often used of the Assyrians in addressing their gods.

[b] 32^{4} Lit., *crookedness*, the antithesis of *upright* in the next line.

[5]His infamous sons have dealt with him corruptly[c]—
A twisted and crooked generation!
[6]Is it Jehovah whom ye thus treat,
O senseless and unwise people?
Is not he thy father, who produced thee?
Is it not he who made thee and established thee?

Jehovah's choice of his people in the past

[7]Remember the days of old,
Consider the days of the past;
Ask thy father and he will tell thee,
Thine elders and they will say to thee:
[8]When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance,
When he separated the sons of men,
He set up the boundaries between the peoples,
As the number of the sons of God.[d]
[9]But the portion of Jehovah is his people;[e]
The measure of his inheritance is Jacob.

His care for Israel in the wilderness

[10]He found him in a land that was a wilderness,[f]
In a waste of howling desert;
Protectingly he encircled and cared for him,
He guarded him as the pupil of his eye.[g]
[11]Like an eagle[h] that stirreth up its nest,
That tenderly hovereth over its young,
He spread out his wings, he took him,
He bore him upon his pinions;
[12]Jehovah alone did lead him,
And no alien God was with him.

His bountiful provision for Israel's needs

[13]He caused him to ride on the heights,[i]
And fed him[j] with the fruitage of the field;
And he caused him to suck honey from the crag,[k]
Oil, also, from the flinty rock,
[14]Curd of kine and sheep's milk,
With the fat of lambs and rams,
With the steers of Bashan and he-goats,

---

[c] 32^{5} All are agreed that this line is corrupt, but the scribal error is evidently a very ancient one. The above reading is based on the Heb. text, corrected with the aid of the Gk., Sam., Syr., and Targ. Another plausible reading suggested by Sym. is, *Altogether corruptly have his sons dealt with him.*

[d] 32^{8} So Gk. Heb., *according to the number of the sons of Israel.* If the Gk. was the original reading, it reflects the late Jewish doctrine that each nation has an angel presiding over it. Cf. Dan. $10^{13, 20, 21}$, 12^{1}, B. Sir. 17^{17}. This idea was clearly in the minds of the Gk. translators.

[e] 32^{9} Both the Sam. and Gk. join *Jacob* with this first line and add *Israel* at the end of the second line. This is strongly supported by the parallelism.

[f] 32^{10} The Gk. adds *and.*

[g] 32^{10} The popular translation, *apple of his eye,* while more familiar is in danger of being misunderstood.

[h] 32^{11} Lit., *griffon-vulture.*

[i] 32^{13} Lit., *on the high places of the earth.*

[j] 32^{13} So Gk., Sym., Luc., and Syr., and supported by the context. The Heb. reads, *And he ate.*

[k] 32^{13} In Palestine the limestone cliffs and caves are frequently the home of the bees.

With the kidney-like fat[l] of wheat;
And the grape's blood he[m] drank as wine,[n]
15 And Jacob ate and was satisfied.[o]

Israel's ingratitude and infidelity

But Jeshurun[p] grew fat and kicked,
He grew fat[q] and stout[r] and sleek,[s]
And he forsook[t] the God who made him,
And despised the rock of his salvation.
16 They made him jealous with strange gods,
With abominations they vexed him.
17 They sacrificed to demons,[u] to no-gods,
To gods whom they knew not,
To new gods who have come in of late,
Before whom your forefathers shuddered not.
18 Of the rock who begat thee, thou thoughtest not,[v]
And didst forget the God who bore thee.[w]

Jehovah's indignation and punishment of Israel

19 But when Jehovah saw, he spurned,
For he was vexed with his sons and his daughters;
20 And he said, 'My face will I hide,
I will see what their end will be;
For a perverse generation[x] are they,
Sons in whom is no faithfulness,
21 Who have made me jealous with a no-god,
They have vexed me with gods that are nothing;[y]
But I will make them jealous with a no-people,
With a senseless nation[z] will I vex them.
22 For in my nostrils a fire is kindled,
And it burneth to the lowest depths of Sheol;
It devoureth the earth and its increase,
And setteth afire the foundations of the mountains.

The different kinds of threatened judgment

23 I will heap calamities upon them,
Mine arrows will I exhaust against them;

---

[l] 32[14] *I. e.*, like the fat about the kidneys, the richest and most nutritious.

[m] 32[14] Both the Gk., Luc., and Lat. have the third person demanded by the context, but the Heb. has the second person.

[n] 32[14] Lit., *foaming* or *fomented*. The Gk. and Luc. have simply *wine*.

[o] 32[15] This line is lacking in the Heb. but has been preserved in the Sym., Gk., Luc., and Targ., and is quoted in 31[20] and Neh. 9[25].

[p] 32[15] Lit., *the Righteous One*, an ancient designation of Israel; so also in 33[5, 26], Is. 44[2], and as a title of the primitive song-book, commemorating Israel's early victories.

[q] 32[15] The figure is that of a fat, sleek, lazy steer. Cf. the same in Am. 4[1].

[r] 32[15] So Gk., Luc., Syr., and Lat. The Heb., which suddenly changes to the second person in this line and then in the next reverts to the third, may possibly be right.

[s] 32[15] The exact meaning of this word is not known. The RV, *sleek*, is based on a revision of the text and is supported by several versions.

[t] 32[15] Lit., *treated as a senseless fool*.

[u] 32[17] Heb., *shedim*, probably similar to the Assyr., *shîdu*, minor deities represented by the bulls or colossi. The Gk. rendering *demons* best reproduces the primitive idea.

[v] 32[18] Following the better reading of the Gk., Sym., Luc., and Targ.

[w] 32[18] Lit., *travailed in anguish*. Jehovah is here conceived of in the double rôle of the father and mother of his people.

[x] 32[20] Lit., *a generation of perversions*, *i. e.*, given to perversions.

[y] 32[21] Lit., *breaths* or *vanities*, a scornful designation of the false heathen deities.

[z] 32[21] A rude, disorganized horde.

[24]They will be shrunken with famine,
And devoured by fierce fever and pestilence,[a]
And the teeth of wild beasts will I send upon them,
With the venom of the crawling things of the dust.[b]
[25]Without, the sword shall bereave,
And within the inner chambers terror,
Young man and virgin alike,
The sucking child with the man of gray hairs.

Jehovah's reputation, not their deserts, tempers his judgment

[26]I would have said, "I will shatter them in pieces,[c]
I will blot out their memory from among men,"
[27]Had I not dreaded vexation from my foes,
Lest their adversaries should not understand,
And say, "Our hand is victorious,"
And not, "Jehovah hath done all this."
[28]For they are as a people bereft of counsel,
And among them there is no understanding.
[29]Had they been wise, they would have understood this,
They would have perceived their final end.'

Jehovah alone can deliver a nation

[30]How should one pursue a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Were it not that their[d] Rock had sold these,
And Jehovah had delivered them up?
[31]For their rock is not as our Rock,
But our enemies themselves must mediate.[e]
[32]For their vine[f] is from the vine of Sodom,
It springs forth from the rank soil of Gomorrah;
Their grapes are poisonous grapes,
They have clusters bitter as gall.
[33]Their wine is the venom of serpents,
Deadly like the poison of cobras.

The coming judgment upon Israel's foes

[34]Is not that laid up in store for me,
Sealed up securely in my treasuries,
[35]For the day[g] of vengeance and recompense,
For the time when their foot shall slip?
Since the day of their ruin is near,
And the things awaiting them are coming fast.

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[a] 32[24] Lit., *bitter destruction*, but the destruction was that of the pestilence. Cf. Ps. 91[6], and *bitter* means *malignant*.
[b] 32[24] Cf. the similar formulas in the Bab. flood story, Vol. I, p. 377.
[c] 32[26] The Heb. word is of doubtful meaning. The above rendering is supported by a cognate root of the Arabic and by the Gk. and Luc.
[d] 32[30] *I. e.*, the Israelites.
[e] 32[31] The idea appears to be somewhat the same as in I Sam. 2[25], where this unusual word is also used. Unlike Jehovah's people, the heathen have no benign God to espouse their cause.
[f] 32[32] *I. e.*, their origin and nature.
[g] 32[35] So Sym., Luc., Gk., and Lat. Heb. and Luc., *for me*. The error, which is an easy one, probably lies in the latter texts. The context also supports the former.

[36]For Jehovah will vindicate[h] his people,
And show himself compassionate toward his servants,
When he seeth that strength is gone,
And that neither fettered nor free remaineth.[i]

[37]And he will say, 'Where are their gods, **Jehovah alone omnipotent**
The rock in which they sought refuge?
[38]They who ate the fat of their sacrifices,
And drank the wine of their libations—
Let them rise up and help you,
Let them be a shelter[j] over you.
[39]See now, I, I am he,
And beside me there is no other god,
It is I who put to death and bring to life,
I have wounded and it is I who heal,
And there is none to deliver out of my hand.
[40]For I lift up my hand to heaven
And say, "As I live forever,
[41]I will whet my glittering sword,[k]
And my hand shall devote itself to judgment,
I will execute vengeance on my adversaries,
And will recompense those who hate me,
[42]I will make my arrows drunk with blood,
And my sword shall devour flesh,
With the blood of the slain and the captors,
From the heads[l] of the hostile leaders."'

[43]Sing joyously, O nations, of his people,[m]
For he will avenge the blood of his servants,
And will execute vengeance upon his adversaries,
And sanctify[n] the land[o] of his people.

§ 171. The Lessons Taught by Israel's Mistakes, Ps. 78

Ps. 78 [1]Give ear, O my people, to my teaching, **Introduction**
Incline your ears to my words.[p]

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[h] 32[36] Lit., *pronounce judgment for*. Cf. the repetition of the vs. in Ps. 135[14].
[i] 32[36] For the same proverbial expression, cf. I Kgs. 14[10], 21[21], II Kgs. 9[8], 14[26]. It is equivalent to *everyone*.
[j] 32[38] Following Sym., Gk., Lat., and Targ. The text reads, *let there be*.
[k] 32[41] Lit., *the lightning of my sword*.
[l] 32[42] So Gk. and Luc. and the probable meaning of the Heb. as supported by the analogy in Judg. 5[2]. Another possible rendering is *long-haired foe*.
[m] 32[43] So Sym., Gk., and Lat.
[n] 32[43] Or *clear from guilt*.
[o] 32[43] So Gk. and Lat.

§ 171 Ps. 78 is one of the most repetitious pss. of the Psalter. It is closely related to the late Jewish haggadistic literature in which the historical was subordinate to the moral and religious purpose. The poet was clearly familiar with the composite narrative of the Pentateuch, cf., *e. g.*, [13. 14], and with still later Jewish interpretations of it such as are found in the book of Jubilees. His identification of the manna in the wilderness with the food of heavenly beings, [25], suggests acquaintance with Gk. thought. The enigma which he is seeking to solve, [2], is apparently the question

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[p] 78[1] Heb., *words of my mouth*.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter enigmas of old,
3 What we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told to us.
4 We will not hide them from their children,
Telling to the generation to come
The praises of Jehovah, and his strength,
And his wonderful works that he hath done.

The reason why Jehovah gave the law to his people

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which he commanded our fathers,
That they should make them known to their children,
6 That the generation to come might know,[q]
Even the children that should be born,[r]
Who should arise and tell them to their children,
7 That they might set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But faithfully keep his commandments,
8 And might not be as their fathers,
A stubborn and rebellious generation,
A generation that set not their heart aright,
And whose spirit was not faithful with God.

Their deceit

9 The children of Ephraim were a deceitful bow,[s]
They turned back on the day of battle.
10 They kept not the covenant of God,
And refused to walk in his law,
11 And they forgot his deeds of might,
And his wondrous works that he had showed them.

Jehovah's mighty deeds at the exodus

12 In the sight of their fathers he did wonders,
In Egypt,[t] in the territory of Zoan.
13 He clave the sea and made them pass through,
And he made the waters to stand up as a heap.
14 By day he led them with a cloud,
And all night with a light of fire.
15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness,[u]

---

of why the rival Samaritans are so perverse and have been rejected by Jehovah. His explanation is that they have been crooked from their earliest days, cf. [9, 59-61], and that Jehovah at the beginning of Israelitish history chose not the tribe of Ephraim but the tribe of Judah, [67-72]. Evidently the ps. is later than the Samaritan schism. The close resemblance between its elaborate preface and that of Pr. and the strong wisdom note all point to the Gk. period as the date. The conception of Israel's history as a cycle of sins, disasters, repentance, and deliverances is that of the editor of Judg.

[q] 78[6] Cf. Dt. 6[20-25].

[r] 78[6] Possibly secondary.

[s] 78[9] Correcting the obscure Heb., which reads, *were armed and carrying bows*, by the close parallel in [57] and the demands of the parallelism.

[t] 78[12] Lit., *the land of Egypt*.

[u] 78[15] Or, emending with Grätz, *as rivers in the wilderness*.

And made them drink abundantly as out of the depths.
[16]He brought streams also out of the rock,
And caused waters to run down like rivers.

Complaints of the people

[17]Yet they continued to sin against him,
To rebel against the Most High in the desert.
[18]And they tempted God in their heart
By asking food according to their appetite;
[19]Yea, they spoke against God and[v] said:
'Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?[w]
[20]Is he also able to give bread?
Will he provide flesh for his people?'

Jehovah's indignation

[21]Therefore Jehovah heard, and was wroth;
And a fire was kindled against Jacob,
And anger also went up against Israel,[x]
[22]Because they believed not in God,
And trusted not in his power to save.[y]

Provision of manna

[23]Yet he commanded the skies above,
And he opened the doors of heaven;
[24]And he rained down manna upon them to eat,
And gave them grain from heaven.
[25]Man did eat the bread of the mighty ones;[z]
He sent them food to the full.

Of quails

[26]He sent out the east wind in the heavens,
And by his power he guided the south wind,
[27]And rained flesh upon them as the dust,
And winged birds as the sand of the seas;
[28]And they fell[a] in the midst of their camp,
Round about their habitations.
[29]So they did eat, and were well filled;
And he brought them that which they desired.

The divine judgment

[30]They were not estranged[b] from that which they desired,
Their food was yet in their mouths,[c]
[31]When the anger of God went up against them,
And slew of the fattest of them,
And smote down the choicest of Israel.

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[v] 78[19] Supplying *and*, required by the metre and context.
[w] 78[19] A scribe, recalling [15, 16], has added the prose note that destroys the parallelism, *Behold, he smote the rock, so that waters gushed out and streams overflowed*.
[x] 78[21] Possibly this line is secondary, for it is not entirely consistent with [28]. The entire vs. may have been added by a scribe who had in mind [31].
[y] 78[22] Lit., *salvation*.
[z] 78[25] The poet here has in mind the ambrosia which was believed to be the food of the gods and angels.
[a] 78[28] So Gk., Lat., and Syr. Heb., *he caused it to fall*.
[b] 78[30] *I. e.*, were in the act of eating.
[c] 78[30] Possibly this line is secondary.

Obtuseness of the people

32 After all this they sinned still,
And believed not in his wonderful works.
33 So he consumed their days in vanity,
And their years in terror.

Their forced repentance

34 When he slew them, then they sought him;
They returned and sought God earnestly.
35 And they remembered that God was their Rock,
And the Most High God their Redeemer.

Their deceitful attitude

36 But they flattered him with their mouth,
And lied to him with their tongue;
37 For their heart was not right with him,
Neither were they faithful to his covenant.

God's compassion

38 But he, indeed, is merciful and gracious,[d]
He forgiveth iniquity, and destroyeth not,
And many times turneth away his anger,
And doth not stir up all his wrath.
39 And he remembered that they were but flesh,
A breath passing away, not to return.

Their repeated rebellions

40 How they rebelled against him in the wilderness,
And grieved him bitterly in the desert!
41 And again they tempted God,
And pained[e] the Holy One of Israel.

Their ingratitude for the judgment sent upon the Egyptians

42 They failed to remember[f] his hand,
And the day when he redeemed them from the adversary;
43 How he set his signs in Egypt,
And his wonders in the field of Zoan,
44 And turned their rivers into blood,
And their streams, so that they could not drink.
45 He sent among them flies, to devour them;
Frogs, likewise, which destroyed them.
46 He gave their increase to the caterpillar,
And the fruits of their labor to the locust.
47 He smote their vines with hail,
And their sycomore trees with frost.
48 He gave over their cattle to the pest,[g]
And their flocks to hot fire-bolts.[h]
49 He sent upon them the heat of his anger,
Wrath, and indignation, and trouble,

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[d] 78³⁸ With Briggs restoring the word required by the metre and parallelism.
[e] 78⁴¹ Or *set a limit to*.
[f] 78⁴² Lit., *remembered not*.
[g] 78⁴⁸ So one Heb. MS. and Syr. Heb., *to hail*.
[h] 78⁴⁸ *I. e.*, pestilence, as in Dt. 32²⁴.

A band of messengers[i] of calamity.
50He made a way for his anger;
He spared not their life from death,
But gave their life over to the pestilence,
51And smote all the first-born in Egypt,
Their strongest[j] in the tents of Ham.

Jehovah's deliverance of his people

52But he led forth his people like sheep,
And guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
53And he led them safely, without dread;
But the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

Their establishment in Canaan

54And he brought them to his sacred border,[k]
To that mountain,[l] which his right hand had gained;
55He drove out the nations before them,
And allotted them an inheritance by line,
And made the Israelites dwell in their tents.[m]

Their apostasy

56Yet they tempted and rebelled against[n] the Most High
And kept not his testimonies;
57But turned back, and dealt treacherously like the fathers,
They turned aside like a deceitful bow,
58For they provoked him to anger with their high places,
And moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

Their judgment at the hands of their foes

59When God heard this, he was wroth,
And greatly abhorred Israel;
60So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,
The tent where he dwelt among men,
61And delivered his strength into captivity,
And his glory into the adversary's hand.
62He gave over his people to the sword,
And was exceedingly wroth with his inheritance.
63Fire devoured their young men;
And their virgins sang[o] no marriage song.
64Their priests fell by the sword;
And their widows made no lamentation.

Jehovah's deliverance

65Then the Lord awaked us out of sleep,
Like a mighty man overcome by wine.[p]
66And he smote his adversaries backward;
He made them a perpetual reproach.

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[i] 78[49] Lit., *a mission, i. e.*, angelic messengers that wrought destruction.
[j] 78[51] Following the VSS. in correcting the Heb. Lit., *the chief of their strength*.
[k] 78[54] *I. e.*, to the borders of the holy land.
[l] 78[54] As in Nu. 13[17, 20], Josh. 11[2]. *Mountain* here probably refers to the uplands of Palestine.
[m] 78[55] Possibly this vs. is a later expansion of the original text.
[n] 78[56] Heb. adds *God*.
[o] 78[63] Lit., *had no marriage song*.
[p] 78[65] This rendering is supported by Gk. and Lat.

His temple at Jerusalem

67 And he refused the tent of Joseph,
And chose not the tribe of Ephraim,
68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
The mount of Zion which he loveth.
69 And he built his sanctuary like the heights,
Like the earth which he hath established forever.

Choice of David

70 And he chose David his servant,
And took him from the sheepfolds;
71 From following the ewes with young he brought him,
To be the shepherd of Jacob his people,
And of Israel his inheritance.
72 So he shepherded them in the integrity of his heart,
And guided them skillfully with his hand.[q]

§ 172. Israel's Rebelliousness and Jehovah's Goodness in the Past, Ps. 106

Jehovah's goodness

Ps. 106 1 Oh give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good,
For his lovingkindness endureth forever.
2 Who can proclaim the mighty acts of Jehovah,
Or show forth all his praise?
3 Blessed are they who guard justice,
And the man who doeth right at all times.

Prayer for his favor

4 Remember us,[r] O Jehovah, with favor;
Oh visit thy people with thy salvation,
5 That we may see the prosperity of thy chosen,
That we may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation,
That we may glory with thine inheritance.

Jehovah's care of ungrateful Israel at the exodus

6 We have sinned together with our fathers,
We have committed iniquity and transgressed.
7 Our fathers[s] understood not thy wonders,
They remembered not the multitude of thy lovingkindnesses,
And were rebellious against thee[t] at the Sea of Reeds.
8 But he saved them for the sake of his name,
That he might make his power known.
9 He rebuked the Sea of Reeds, and it dried up;

---

[q] 78[72] Following the superior text of many Heb. MSS. Lit., *with the skill of his hand*.

§ 172 This ps. deals with the same theme as 78 and 105. Its purpose is didactic although it was intended for liturgical use. The author aims to bring out Jehovah's goodness by contrasting it with Israel's rebellions and ingratitude. Hence he begins with the people's lack of faith at the exodus. In general he follows the composite tradition of Ex. and Nu., indicating that he wrote late in the Persian or more probably in the Gk. period. Vs. [47] indicates that the restoration was not yet complete. The ps. is really a midrash set to music. The general theory of Israel's history is that of the author of the book of Judges: it was a repeated cycle of rebellion, affliction at the hands of heathen foes, and divine deliverance.

[r] 106[4] So Gk., Aquila, Theod., and certain Heb. MSS. Heb., *me*, and so throughout the vs.

[s] 106[7] Heb. adds *in Egypt*, but this destroys the metre and is probably only a scribal addition.

[t] 106[7] Slightly revising the Heb. The Gk. variant indicates that the vs. was corrupt.

So he led them in the depths, as in a wilderness,[u]
10 And he saved them from the hand of the enemy,
And redeemed them from the hand of the foe.
11 And the waters covered their adversaries;
Not even one of them was left.
12 Then they believed his words,
They sang his praise.[v]

In the wilderness

13 They soon forgot his works,
They waited not for his counsel,
14 But felt a great longing in the wilderness,
And tested God in the desert.
15 And he granted to them their request,
But sent leanness[w] unto their soul.
16 In the camp they were envious of Moses,
And of Aaron, the holy one of Jehovah;
17 The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan,
And covered the company of Abiram,
18 And a fire consumed their company;
The flame burned up the wicked.[x]

At Horeb

19 They made a calf at Horeb,
And worshipped a molten image;
20 Thus they exchanged their glory
For the image of an ox that eats grass.
21 They forgot God their Saviour,
Who had done great deeds in Egypt,
22 Wonderful works in the land of Ham,
Terrible deeds at the Red Sea.
23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them,
Had it not been that Moses his chosen
Stood before him, stepping into the breach,
To turn away his wrath from destroying.

On the borders of Canaan

24 Then they despised the pleasant land,
They believed not his word,
25 But murmured in their tents,
And heeded not the voice of Jehovah.
26 So he swore unto them with uplifted hand,
That he would let them perish in the wilderness,
27 And that he would sow their seed among the nations,
And scatter them abroad[y] in the lands.

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[u] 106[9] An echo of Is. 63[13].

[v] 106[12] Possibly this two-beat couplet is secondary.

[w] 106[15] The parallel narrative in Nu. 11[20] has a similar Heb. word meaning *disgust*. This may be original and the present Heb. the result of a scribal error. Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 350) proposes to revise so as to read *food;* but this change is not supported by the parallel treatment of the theme in the rest of the ps.

[x] 106[18] This vs., which duplicates [17], may be a later expansion.

[y] 106[27] Slightly revising the Heb. verb, which is, through a scribal error, but a repetition of that in the preceding lines. Cf. Ezek. 20[23].

At Baal-peor

28 They joined themselves to Baal-peor,
And ate the sacrifices of the dead.[z]
29 Thus they provoked him by their doings;
And the plague broke out among them.
30 Then Phinehas stood up and interceded,
And so the plague was stayed.
31 And that was counted to him for righteousness
From generation to generation forever.

At Meribah

32 They angered him[a] at the waters of Meribah,
So that on their account it went ill with Moses,
33 Because they rebelled against his spirit,[b]
And he spoke rashly with his lips.

In the land of Canaan

34 They did not utterly destroy the peoples,
Even as Jehovah had commanded them,
35 But let themselves mingle with the heathen,
And learned to do as they did;
36 They also did obeisance to their idols,
Which became to them a snare.
37 They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons,[c]
38 And shed the blood of the innocent,
And the land was polluted with bloodshed.
39 Thus they were defiled by their acts,
And played the harlot by their doings.

Under the rule of the Assyrians

40 And Jehovah's wrath was kindled against his people,
And he regarded his inheritance with abhorrence,
41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen,
And those who hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies, likewise, oppressed them,
And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
43 Many times did he deliver them;
But they themselves were rebellious against his[d] counsel,
And they wasted away in their iniquity.[e]

In exile

44 Nevertheless he regarded their distress,
When he heard their cry of wailing,
45 And he remembered for them his covenant,
And relented according to the abundance of his lovingkindnesses.
46 He made them also to be pitied
By all those who had carried them captive.

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[z] 106^{28} *I. e.*, offered to dead idols or else sacrifices offered to the spirits of the dead.
[a] 106^{32} So Gk.
[b] 106^{33} *I. e.*, Jehovah's spirit.
[c] 106^{37} Probably demons of animal form. The word is from Assyr., *shêdu*. Cf. Dt. 32^{17}, Is. 13^{21}, 34^{14}.
[d] 106^{43} Correcting the Heb. as the context demands.
[e] 106^{43} Correcting with the aid of Lev. 26^{39}. Possibly the line is secondary.

Prayer for restoration

47 Save us, O Jehovah our God,
And gather us from among the nations,
To give thanks to thy holy name,
And to voice our pride in thy praise.[f]

§ 173. Jehovah's Ability to Deliver as of Old, Ps. 77

The problem: Why does Jehovah not respond to the cry of his servants?

Ps. 77 1 I will cry to God with my voice,
To God with my voice, and he will heed me.
2 In the day of my distress I seek him,[g]
My hand is stretched out[h] and slacked not,
My soul refuseth to be comforted.
3 I remember God and am disquieted,
I muse and my spirit fainteth.
4 I lay hold of[i] the night watches with mine eyes,
I am so restless that I cannot speak.
5 I consider the days of old,
I recall the years of yore,
6 I soliloquize[j] by night in my mind,
I muse and my spirit maketh diligent search:
7 'Will the Lord cast off forever?
And will he be favorable no more?
8 Is his lovingkindness clean gone forever?
Doth his promise fail forevermore?
9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious?
Hath he in anger shut up his compassion?'

The solution: Jehovah's power revealed in Israel's past

10 And I said, 'This[k] is my infirmity.
The years of the right hand of the Most High,
11 And the deeds of Jehovah I will recall,
Yea, I will remember thy wonders of old,
12 I will meditate also upon all thy work,
And muse on the deeds which thou hast done.'
13 Thy way, O God, is holy.
Who is a great God like to Jehovah?
14 Thou art the God that doest wonders;

---

f 106:47 An editor has appended to this ps., which concludes the fourth division of the Psalter, the doxology:

Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
From everlasting to everlasting.
And let all the people say, Amen.

§ 173 The unity of the ps. has been questioned. Duhm finds two poems, 1-15. 20 and 16-19; Briggs, 1-15 and 16-20. Vss. 16 ff. are, however, but a highly poetic development of the theme of 15: Jehovah's acts of deliverance in Israel's early history. The thought of the ps. is closely related to that of 78 and 80. It probably comes from the latter part of the Persian or else of the Gk. period when the persecutions of the court at Antioch and of the apostate high priests were making the lot of the faithful increasingly trying.

g 77:2 Heb. adds *the Lord*.

h 77:2 Following the Lat. in interpreting the unusual Heb. word. Heb. adds *night*.

i 77:4 So Lat. and Sym.

j 77:6 Correcting with the aid of the Gk. and Lat.

k 77:10 *This* refers to his doubt. He asserts that he will correct this by recalling what Jehovah has done in the past.

Thou hast made known thy strength among the peoples.
15 Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people,
The sons of Jacob and Joseph.

In his control of the forces of nature

16 The waters saw thee, O God;
The waters saw thee, they were in travail;[l]
17 The clouds poured out water,
The skies sent out a sound,
Thine arrows also went abroad.
18 The sound of thy thunder was in the whirlwind,
Thy[m] lightnings lightened the world,
The earth trembled and shook,
16c The depths likewise trembled.
19 Thy way, O Jehovah,[n] was in the sea,
And thy paths in the great waters,
And the prints of thy feet were not known.
20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock,
By the hand of Moses and Aaron.

§ 174. A Lesson from Israel's Past, Ps. 81$^{7-16}$

Jehovah's care for his people

Ps. 81 7 In distress thou didst call and I delivered thee,
I answered thee in the secret place of thunder;
I proved thee at the waters of Meribah.

His entreaty for their loyalty

8 Hear, O people, and I will testify to thee:
O Israel, if thou hadst but hearkened to me,
9 There would have been in the midst of thee no strange god,
And thou wouldst not have worshipped an alien god.
10 I, indeed, am Jehovah thy God,
Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt.
Hadst thou opened wide thy mouth, I would have filled it.

Israel's disloyalty

11 But my people hearkened not to my voice,
And Israel would have nothing to do with me.
12 And so I let them go in the stubbornness of their heart,
That they might follow counsels of their own.

What Jehovah would do if Israel would obey him

13 Oh that my people would hearken[o] to me,
That Israel would walk in my ways!

---

[l] 77[16] The Heb. adds *the depths likewise trembled*, but this destroys the parallelism and logical development of the thought and evidently originally stood at the end of [18], where it supplies the line demanded by the context.

[m] 77[18] So the Gk. MSS., Lat., and Syr.

[n] 77[19] Supplying the word required by the metre and context.

§ 174 The teachings of this ps. are familiar to the readers of Dt. and Pr. It is the naïve philosophy of history which a later editor of Judg. has embodied in its framework. The ps. probably comes from the latter part of the Persian or the earlier part of the Gk. period.

[o] 81[13] Slightly revising the Heb. as the context requires.

14 Right soon would I subdue their enemies,
And turn my hand against their adversaries.
15 The haters of Jehovah would submit to them,
And their time would endure forever.
16 I would feed them[p] also with the finest of the wheat,
And with honey from the rock would I satisfy them.[q]

§ 175. Jehovah the Source of all Prosperity, Ps. 127

Of material prosperity

Ps. 127 1 Except Jehovah build the house, its builders[r] labor in vain.
Except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain.
2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit down late,
To eat the bread of toil; so he giveth his beloved sleep.[s]

Of domestic bliss

3 Lo, children are a gift from Jehovah, the fruit of the womb is a reward.
4 As arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of youth.
5 Happy indeed is the man whose quiver is full of them,
He[t] shall not be put to shame when he speaketh with his enemies within the gate.

§ 176. The Prosperity of Jehovah's People, Ps. 144^12-15

The blessings of peace

Ps. 144 12 Our sons[u] are like saplings, grown tall in their youth;
Our daughters are like corner-pillars, carved like a temple.
13 Our garners are full, affording all kinds of store;
The sheep are bringing forth thousands and ten thousands in the fields.[v]
14 Our cattle are great with young, and none miscarry;
There are no goings forth to war, no outcrys in the squares.

Their source

15 Happy the people, when they have it so!
Happy the people when Jehovah is their God!

---

p 81^16 Again revising the Heb. as the context requires. Heb., *he will cause him to eat.*

q 81^16 So one Heb. MSS., Gk., and Lat. Heb., *thee.*

§ 175 Many interpreters regard this ps. as a composite, but both stanzas illustrate the fact that in the end all of man's prosperity comes from Jehovah: house, the security of the city, and children. These represent, respectively, material, political, and domestic peace and prosperity. Instead of being composite this is conspicuous for its close literary unity. It probably comes from the Gk. period. It is one of very few examples of Heb. poetry written in a prevailing six-beat measure.

r 127^1 Following the Gk. in revising the corrupt Heb.

s 127^2 Most recent commentators translate *in sleep*, but there is no indication in the Heb. or VSS. that sleep is the direct object which the verb demands. The idea is that sleep is a gift of Jehovah. Therefore men are foolish to reject it by rising too early or sitting up too late.

t 127^5 Following one Gk. text in translating the verbs in this line as singular rather than as plural.

§ 176 This little four-beat poem is appended to a longer three-beat Maccabean hymn. It is probable that it is a fragment of a longer ps. The presence of many Aramaisms and its position in the Psalter suggest that it is a song of thanksgiving and exultation expressing the feelings of the Jews under their Maccabean rulers, when at last, as in the days of Simon, they enjoyed in peace the fruits of their many conflicts and victories. The figures of speech are vigorous and the constructions original.

u 144^12 The editor who joined this poem to the Maccabean prayer has prefaced it by the word *because*.

v 144^13 The Heb. word is usually translated *streets*, but Briggs is undoubtedly right in maintaining that in the present context it has the meaning *fields* or *pastures*.

II

THE VALUE OF THE LAW

Pss. 19[7-14], 119

§ 177. The Excellency and Potency of Jehovah's Law, Ps. 19[7-14]

Character and effect of Jehovah's law

Ps. 19 7 The law[a] of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the life,[b]
The testimony of Jehovah is trustworthy, making wise the simple,
8 The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the mind,
The commandment[c] of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes,
9 The fear[d] of Jehovah is clean, enduring forever,
The judgments[e] of Jehovah are true and righteous altogether,
10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold,
Sweeter also than honey and the droppings from the honey comb.
11 By them is thy servant warned; in keeping them is great reward.

Prayer for guidance in keeping the law

12 Who can discern his errors; cleanse me from secret faults,
13 And from presumptuous sins restrain thy servant;[f] let them not have dominion over me;
Then shall I be perfect and cleared from great transgression.
14 Let the words of my mouth be acceptable, and the meditation of my heart,
In thy sight, O Jehovah, my Rock and my Redeemer.

§ 178. The Duty and Blessedness of Studying the Law, Ps. 119

Aleph

Ps. 119 1 Blessed are they whose way is blameless, who follow Jehovah's law;
2 Happy are they who observe his decrees,[g] who seek him whole heartedly;

§ 177 This ps. in praise of the law was appropriately joined with the noble poem in praise of God's glory as revealed in the heavens. Cf. § 92. Like Ps. 119, which it closely resembles in theme and vocabulary, it has in the first stanza at least a regular five-beat measure which appropriately expresses that passionate love and enthusiasm which filled the heart of the psalmist. The language is that of the late priestly school. The law and the ritual are the central forces in Israel's life. The ps. was evidently written after the priestly reformation of Nehemiah and Ezra. Apparently the priestly law has been enforced long enough to develop an intense love and appreciation of it. The ps., therefore, may be dated some time during the Gk. period. It was well adapted for use in the synagogue and for purposes of practical instruction. It is a signal demonstration of the fact that the Jewish law, instead of being regarded as a burden, was considered a blessing, Jehovah's best gift to his loyal worshippers.

[a] 19[7] In this context the Heb. word *torah* is evidently used in the technical sense as a description of the priestly teachings embodied in the Heb. scriptures.

[b] 19[7] The Heb. idiom means, literally, *restores physical vigor.*

[c] 19[8] *I. e.*, Jehovah's will and character as revealed through Israel's teachers and through the experiences of the nation and of the individual. It was through the cumulative experience of the race that the simple—that is, the inexperienced—were to be made wise.

[d] 19[9] This is probably here used as a technical definition of the laws which dealt especially with worship. Cf. Ps. 34[11].

[e] 19[9] The Heb. term here translated *judgments* is a technical designation of the typical civil, social, and ceremonial laws such as are found in Ex. 21–23.

[f] 19[13] Many translators favor the rendering, *also restrain thy servant from the presumptuous.* In this case the reference would be to the arrogant rulers and would accord well with the latter part of the line, but it introduces a note not found elsewhere in the ps.; furthermore, it is not supported by the succeeding line. Therefore the current translation is adopted.

§ 178 This ps. is the longest, most elaborate, most artificial poem in the Psalter. It has twenty-two divisions corresponding to the letters of the Heb. alphabet and eight succeeding lines begin with the same letter of the alphabet. In this respect it is akin to Lam. 3, which has three

[g] 119[2] Lit., *testimonies*, but in this ps., as in Dt. 6[20], it is clearly equivalent to *decrees* or *ordinances.*

3Yea, they commit no iniquity, they walk in his ways.
4It is thou who hast given thy precepts, that they may be zealously kept.
5Oh that my ways were established, to observe thy statutes!
6Then I shall never be ashamed, when I have regard to all of thy commandments.
7I give thanks to thee with uprightness of heart, learning thy just judgments.
8Thy laws do I keep, O Jehovah,[h] forsake me not utterly.

9Whereby shall a young man keep his way pure? By observing thy word. Beth
10With all my heart I seek thee, let me not wander from thy commands.
11Within my heart, that I may not sin against thee, I store up thy word;[i]
12Blessed be thou, O Jehovah! Teach me thy statutes.
13With my lips I recount all the righteous[j] judgments of thy mouth;
14In the way of thy decrees I rejoice, as much as in all riches;
15I meditate on thy decrees, and I attentively regard thy ways;
16In thy statutes I take delight, I forget not thy words.

17Deal kindly with thy servant that I may live, and that I may keep thy word; Gimel
18Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.
19A sojourner am I on the earth, hide not from me thy commands;
20My soul is in exile in its longings at all times for thy judgments.
21Thou rebukest the proud, the accursed, who err from thy commands.
22Take away from me reproach and contempt, for I have kept thy decrees;
23Though princes sit and talk against me, thy servant doth meditate on thy statutes;
24Yea, thy decrees are my delight, they are the men of my counsel.

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lines beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Many of the lines also rhyme at the end. The original measure, which has been at points obscured through scribal additions or omissions, was a regular five-beat. Here, even more than in the other acrostic pss., the parallelism of thought is sacrificed to artificial form. Briggs, in his translation of this ps., has sought by an elaborate transposition of vss. and rearrangement of material to restore a certain parallelism in each succeeding couplet. But even if these radical emendations be accepted, it must be admitted that the parallelism of thought is still incomplete.

The author of this ps. was an early Pharisee or Hasidean who refers repeatedly to the persecutions which he had experienced at the hands of the proud and treacherous apostates who constantly deride and oppress him. It is evident that he was a man of prominence in the community about whom rallied those who were faithful to the law. The indications all point to the earlier part of the Maccabean period as the date of this ps. Its aim was to set forth the value of the law and of the rewards which came from faithfully observing its commands. In this respect it is a valuable historical document, for it expresses the feelings and the devotion of many of the Jews during the earlier part of the Maccabean struggle who preferred death rather than give up their law. It is also a confession of faith. Its acrostic form suggests that it was written so that it might be memorized and recited by the candidates for membership in the scribal order, if not by all faithful Jews. The eight lines under each letter of the alphabet were probably intended to correspond to the eight synonyms for the law which constantly recur throughout the pss. Some commentators have gone so far as to restore these whenever they do not occur in each section, and it is not impossible that their absence at many points in the present text is due to scribal errors.

Duhm's statement that this ps. is the 'emptiest production that ever blackened paper' is, of course, extreme. Its artificial character has resulted, as was practically inevitable, in a large amount of repetition. There is also little trace of logical progress in the thought. The chief emphasis is not upon life and deeds but upon belief and form. The moral and social teachings of the earlier prophets have largely disappeared. Devotion to God and abstract devotion to the law have taken the place of love and service to one's fellow men. Aside from certain lines which possess a beauty and charm of their own, the value of the ps. as a whole is chiefly historical in that it represents the point of view and beliefs of early scribal Pharisaism.

[h] 119[8] Supplying *O Jehovah*, as the measure demands.

[i] 119[11] Slightly changing the order of the Heb. words as the measure and logical sense require.

[j] 119[13] Supplying, for metrical reasons, the word *righteous*, suggested by a variant reading of the Syr.

Daleth

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust, revive me as thou hast promised.[k]
26 My ways have I told and thou hast answered me; teach me thy statutes;
27 Make me see the way of thy precepts, that I may meditate on thy wonders.
28 My soul melteth away with sorrow, raise me as thou hast promised;[k]
29 Keep far from me the way of falsehood, and favor me with thy law.
30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness, I crave[l] thy judgments.
31 I cleave, O Jehovah, unto thy decrees; let me not be put to shame.
32 The way of thy commands do I run, for thou wilt encourage my heart.

He

33 Interpret to me thy statutes, O Jehovah, and I will faithfully keep them;[m]
34 Enlighten me, that I may keep thy law and observe it with my whole heart.
35 Lead me in the path of thy precepts, for therein is my delight.
36 Incline my heart to thy decrees, and not to the desire for gain.
37 Turn away mine eyes from vain desires;[n] quicken me in my ways.
38 Confirm to thy servant thy word, which pertaineth to the fear of thee.
39 Turn away from me the reproach which I fear, for thy judgments are good.
40 Behold, I long for thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness.

Vau

41 Let thy lovingkindness[o] bring me thy salvation as thou hast promised;
42 Then for him who reproacheth me I shall have an answer, for I trust in thy word.
43 Snatch not away the word of truth[p] from my mouth, for I hope for thy judgment.
44 I will keep thy law continually, forever and ever,
45 And I will walk in a path that is broad, for I study thy precepts;
46 And I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and I will know no shame.
47 I will find my delight in thy commands, which I love exceedingly.[q]
48 I will lift up my hands to thy commands,[r] and I will meditate on thy statutes.

Zayin

49 Remember thy promises to thy[s] servant, for which thou causedst me to hope.
50 This is my comfort in mine affliction, that thou hast quickened me as thou didst promise.
51 The proud scorn me exceedingly, but I have not swerved from thy law.
52 I remember thy judgments from of old, O Jehovah, and comfort myself.
53 Burning rage hath seized me because of the wicked,[t] they who have forsaken thy law.
54 Thy statutes have become my songs in the house of my sojourning.
55 I remember by night thy name,[u] and I keep thy law.
56 This hath become my portion, for I keep thy precepts.

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[k] 119[25, 28] Lit., *according to thy word.*
[l] 119[30] Changing one Heb. letter, which gives a reading strongly supported by the parallelism.
[m] 119[33] Lit., *I will keep it every step.*
[n] 119[37] Lit., *from regarding vanity.*
[o] 119[41] So Gk.
[p] 119[43] Omitting with Syr. the superfluous adverbial phrase *utterly.*
[q] 119[47] Adding with the Gk. the word *exceedingly*, required to complete the line.
[r] 119[48] Omitting the phrase *which I love*, which was probably added by mistake from the preceding line.
[s] 119[49] So one Gk. text and Theod., supported by the context.
[t] 119[53] Cf. Briggs, *Pss.*, II, 425, *a burning wind from.*
[u] 119[55, 56] Omitting *Jehovah*, which destroys the measure.

57 I say it is my portion, O Jehovah, to observe thy words. Cheth
58 I entreat thy favor with my whole heart; be gracious to me as thou hast promised.
59 I have considered thy ways and turned my feet to thy decrees.
60 I make haste and give myself no delay, in keeping thy commands.
61 The cords of the wicked have enclosed me, but I do not forget thy law.
62 At midnight I rise to give thanks to thee for thy righteous judgments.
63 I am a companion of all who fear thee, and keep thy precepts.
64 The earth is full of thy goodness,[u] teach me thy laws.

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Jehovah, according to thy word. Teth
66 Good taste and knowledge teach me, for I believe in thy commandments.
67 Before I was afflicted I erred, but now I observe thy bidding.
68 Good and the doer of good art thou; teach me thy statutes.
69 The proud forge[v] lies against me, but I keep thy precepts;[w]
70 Their heart is gross with fatness, but I delight in thy law.
71 Well was it for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.
72 The law of thy mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver.

73 Thy hands have made and fashioned me,[x] that I may learn thy commands. Yodh
74 May those who fear me see me and be glad, for I hope in thy word.
75 I know that thy judgments are just,[y] and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.
76 Let thy lovingkindness come to comfort me, as thou hast promised to thy servant.
77 Let thy compassion come to me that I may live, for thy law is my delight.
78 Let the proud be put to shame, for they ill-treat me,[z] but I meditate on thy precepts.
79 Let those who fear thee turn to thee, that they may know thy decrees.
80 Let my heart be perfect in thy statutes, that I may not be filled with shame.

81 My soul pines for thy help, I hope in thy word. Kaph
82 Mine eyes pine for thy promises,[a] when wilt thou comfort me?
83 Though I have become like a wineskin in smoke,[b] I forget not thy statutes.
84 How many are the days of thy servant? How long ere thy judgment?[c]
85 The proud have dug pitfalls for me, not according to thy law.
86 All thy commands are faithful; without cause they pursue me; help me!
87 Almost they consume me from the earth, but I have not forsaken thy precepts.
88 According to thy lovingkindness quicken me, that I may keep thy decrees.[d]

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v 119:69 Lit., *they smear*.
w 119:69 Heb. adds *with my whole heart*.
x 119:73 Heb. adds *give me understanding*, but this is inconsistent with the metre and loosely connected with the context.
y 119:75 The word *Jehovah* has here been added.
z 119:78 A later scribe has expanded by adding *without cause*.
a 119:82 Heb. adds *saying*.
b 119:83 Like skins hanging where they would be dried and blackened by fire and smoke.
c 119:84 Following Briggs (*Pss.*, II, 428) as the metre and parallelism require.
d 119:88 Lit., *decrees of thy mouth*.

Lamedh 89 Forever, O Jehovah, is thy word fixed in heaven.
90 Thou hast established thy faithfulness for all generations and thy promise standeth.[e]
91 As for thy judgments, they stand this day, for they are all thy servants.
92 Unless thy law had been my delight, then had I perished in mine affliction.
93 Never shall I forget thy precepts, for through them thou dost quicken me.
94 Thine I am, deliver me; for I study thy precepts.
95 The wicked lie in wait for me to destroy me; I consider thy decrees.
96 I see an end to all perfection, but thy command is infinite.

Mem 97 Oh how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day.
98 Thy command maketh me wiser than my foes, for it is forever mine own.
99 More insight than all my teachers have I, for thy decrees are my meditation.
100 More understanding than mine elders have I, for thy precepts I keep.
101 I refrain my feet from every evil path, that I may keep thy word.
102 From thy judgments I do not turn aside my steps, for thou art my teacher.
103 How pleasant are thy words to my palate! More than honey to my mouth.
104 From thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every path of falsehood.

Nun 105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet,[f] a light to my path.
106 I have sworn an oath and will keep it, to observe thy righteous judgments.
107 I am greatly afflicted, O Jehovah; quicken me as thou hast promised.
108 Accept the offerings of my mouth,[g] and teach me thy judgments.
109 My life is continually in my hands, but I forget not thy law.
110 For me the wicked set snares, but I stray not from thy precepts.
111 Thy decrees are mine inheritance forever, for they are the joy of my heart.
112 I incline my heart to keep thy statutes as an eternal reward.

Samekh 113 Men who are of two minds I hate; but thy law I love.
114 It is thou who art my succor and my shield, for thy word I wait.
115 Depart from me, ye evil-doers, for I will keep the commands of my God.
116 Uphold me as thou hast promised, and I will live, and shame me not in my hope.
117 Support me that I may be saved, and I will delight[h] continually in thy statutes.
118 Thou dost cast off all who swerve from thy statutes, for their deceit is delusion.
119 Thou dost reject like dross all the wicked;[i] therefore I love thy decrees.
120 My flesh shuddereth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.

Ayin 121 Justice and right have I done, leave me not to mine oppressors.
122 Be thou a surety for thy servant, for his welfare; let not the proud oppress me.

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[e] 119^{90} Correcting the Heb., which reads, without any connection with the context, *thou hast fixed the earth firm and it standeth.*
[f] 119^{105} So Gk. and Syr.
[g] 119^{108} Heb. adds *Jehovah.*
[h] 119^{117} So VSS., supported by the context.
[i] 119^{119} Lit., *all the wicked of the earth.*

123 Mine eyes pine for thy salvation, and for the righteousness which thou hast promised.[j]
124 Deal with thy servant according to thy lovingkindness, and teach me thy statutes.
125 I am thy servant, give me understanding that I may know thy decrees.
126 It is time for Jehovah to act; they have broken thy law;
127 Therefore do I love thy commandments more than gold and fine gold.
128 Therefore all thy precepts[k] I deem right, I hate every false way.

129 Wonderful are thy decrees; therefore my soul doth keep them. Pe
130 The opening of thy revelations[l] giveth light, insight to the simple.
131 My mouth I open wide and pant, for thy commands I long.
132 Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is their right who love thy name.
133 Direct my paths according to thy promise, let no evil rule me.
134 Redeem me from the oppression of man, and I will keep thy precepts.
135 Let thy countenance shine on thy servant, and teach me thy statutes.
136 Waters stream[m] from mine eyes because they keep not thy laws.

137 Righteous art thou, O Jehovah, and thy judgments are upright. Tsadhe
138 Righteous are thy decrees which thou hast commanded, and absolutely faithful.
139 My zeal consumeth me, for thy foes have forgotten thy word.
140 Thy word is thoroughly pure, and thy servant loveth it.
141 Feeble am I and despised, but I do not forget thy precepts.
142 Thy righteousness is right forever, and thy law is truth.
143 Trouble and distress have overtaken me; thy commands are my delight.
144 Thy decrees are righteous forever; enlighten me that I may live.

145 I call with my whole heart,[n] answer me; for I would obey thy statutes. Qoph
146 I call thee, O Jehovah, help me, and I will keep thy decrees.[o]
147 At dawn[p] I arise and cry, I wait for thy words.
148 Mine eyes anticipate the night watches to muse on thy words.[q]
149 Hear my voice in thy lovingkindness, quicken me as thou thinkest just.
150 Those who pursue me[r] with evil devices draw near, they who are far from thy law.
151 But thou, O Jehovah, art nigh, and all thy commands are truth.
152 Long ago I learned of thy decrees, that thou hast founded them forever.

153 Behold my affliction and deliver me, for I have not forgotten thy law. Resh
154 Plead my cause and avenge me; quicken me as thou hast promised.
155 Help is far from the wicked, for they consider not thy statutes.

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[j] 119[123] Lit., *to the promise of thy righteousness*.
[k] 119[128] Gk. and Lat., *to all my precepts*. The text of this line is somewhat doubtful.
[l] 119[130] Lit., *thy words*.
[m] 119[136] Lit., *streams of water*.
[n] 119[145] Transferring *Jehovah* to its place in the next line as the metre demands.
[o] 119[146] Following the marginal reading of the Heb.
[p] 119[147] Or, *twilight*.
[q] 119[148] Following the Gk. and Lat.
[r] 119[150] So twelve Heb. MSS., Gk., Lat., and Syr.

156 Thy compassions, O Jehovah, are great; quicken me as thou thinkest just.
157 Many are my persecutors and my adversaries, but I turn not aside from thy decrees.
158 When I behold the treacherous I loathe them, for they have not kept thy word.
159 Behold how I love thy precepts;[s] quicken me as thou lovest me.[t]
160 The sum of thy words[u] is truth, all thy righteous judgments are eternal.

Shin

161 Princes pursue me without cause, but I fear thy[v] word.
162 I take delight in thy promise, like a man who discovereth great spoil.
163 Falsehood I hate and abhor; thy law do I love.
164 Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.
165 Great peace have they who love thy law, they have no cause for stumbling.
166 I hope for thy deliverance, O Jehovah, and I do thy commands.
167 My soul keepeth thy decrees, and I love them exceedingly.
168 I keep thy precepts and decrees, for before thee are all my ways.

Tau

169 May my cry come near before thee;[w] enlighten me as thou hast promised.
170 May my supplication come before thee; deliver me as thou hast said.
171 My lips will pour forth praise, for thou teachest me thy statutes.
172 My tongue will sing of thy word, for all thy commands are righteous.
173 May thy hand come to my help, for I have chosen thy precepts.
174 I long for thy salvation, O Jehovah; thy law is my delight.
175 May my soul live and praise thee, and thy judgments help me.
176 Though I stray,[x] seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commands.

III

THE PROPHETIC STANDARDS OF RIGHT AND WRONG

Ps. 15, 36^{1-4}, 50

§ 179. The Psalmist's Decalogue, Ps. 15

Exordium

Ps. 15 1 O Jehovah, who shall abide in thy tent?[a]
Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

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[s] 119^{159} Heb. adds *Jehovah*.
[t] 119^{159} Lit., *according to thy lovingkindness*.
[u] 119^{160} Correcting the Heb. with the aid of the Gk. and Syr.
[v] 119^{161} Lit., *my heart feareth*.
[w] 119^{169} Heb. adds *Jehovah*.
[x] 119^{176} A scribe, developing the figure suggested by the verb, has added *like a sheep that is lost*.

§ 179 This ps. has the simple title, *Psalm of David*. Its didactic character explains why it was not included in special collections of pss. It is the decalogue of a later psalmist who, in the spirit of the prophets, defines the qualifications for citizenship in Zion in the terms of life and act. He was acquainted with the Deuteronomic and Holiness codes. Cf., *e. g.*, ^{5a} and Lev. 25^{37}. The question form and the figure employed are shared in common with Is. 33^{14-16}:

The sinners in Zion are filled with terror,
Shuddering has seized the impious,

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[a] 15^{1} *I. e.*, be the guest of Jehovah.

2 He who walketh without fault and doeth right, — The qualifications of a true worshipper of Jehovah
And speaketh the truth in his heart,
3 Who uttereth no slander[b] with his tongue,
Doeth no wrong to his friend,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.
4 In his eyes the reprobate[c] is despised,
But those who fear Jehovah he honoreth,
He sweareth to his neighbor[d] and changeth not.
5 He lendeth not his money for usury,
Nor taketh a bribe against the innocent.[e]
He who doeth these things shall never be moved.

§ 180. Characteristics of a Thoroughly Bad Man, Ps. 36$^{1-4}$

Ps. 36 1 An impious utterance is in the mind[f] of the wicked man, — The criminal type
There is no fear of God before his eyes;
2 For he flatters himself in his sight,
That his hateful iniquity will not be found out.[g]
3 His words[h] are trouble and deceit;
He has ceased to act wisely and well.
4 He plans on his bed to make trouble,
He devotes himself to a way that is not good,
Evil he does not abhor.

Who [of us, they say], can abide with devouring fire?
Who can abide with everlasting burning?

He who walks in righteousness, and speaks uprightness,
He who rejects that which is gained through oppression,
Who keeps his hand from taking a bribe,
Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,
And who shuts his eyes so as not to countenance evil.
He shall dwell in lofty heights,
The fastnesses of the rock shall be his stronghold,
His bread is provided, his waters are assured.

The parallels are so many and close that there is little doubt that the one is dependent upon the other and the dependence appears to be on the part of the ps. There are no points of contact, however, with the priestly codes or the later ceremonialism. The ps. was probably written before the great priestly reformation about 400 B.C., but it may well have been inspired by the earlier reform work of Nehemiah which led up to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. It emphasizes the same practical virtues as did Nehemiah, according to Neh. 5. The noble standard that it holds up is one of the high-water marks of O.T. revelation. The psalmist evidently had in mind the ancient decalogue, for he suggests ten sins to which men were especially prone. The ps. deals, however, with acts rather than motives and is in this respect below the exalted yet practical standard held up by Jesus.

[b] 15^3 Lit., *go about with slander on his tongue.* The exact Eng. idiom is, gives no currency to slander.

[c] 15^4 Gk., *the evil-doer.* Possibly this is original.

[d] 15^4 So Gk. and Syr. and the demands of the context. Heb., *evil* or *hurt.*

[e] 15^5 Cf. Dt. 16^{19}.

§ 180 This portrait of a thoroughly bad man fits any race or age. It belongs more appropriately in the book of Proverbs, with which it has close affinities, than at the beginning of a ps. describing Jehovah's goodness. It was probably added by an editor who lived in the Gk. period when the sages of Israel were at the height of their influence.

[f] 36^1 Lit., *An oracle of transgression it is to the evil man in the midst of his heart.* Certain Gk. MSS. and Lat. and Syr. are doubtless right in reading *his heart* or *mind,* as the context demands.

[g] 36^2 The meaning of this vs. is obscure. The Heb. verb means, lit., *It flatters him in his eyes as regards the finding out of his hateful iniquity.* The above rendering apparently represents the thought in the mind of the psalmist and is in accord with the preceding context.

[h] 36^3 Lit., *words of his mouth.*

§ 181. What Jehovah Demands of His People, Ps. 50

Introduction: Jehovah's advent to judge his people

Ps. 50 1The God of gods[i] speaketh,
Jehovah calleth the earth
From the rising of the sun to its setting.
2Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, he[j] shineth forth.
3Our God cometh and is not silent,[k]
Fire devoureth before him,
And round about him the tempest rageth mightily.
4He calleth to the heavens above,[l]
And to the earth that he may judge his people:
5'Gather to me my godly ones,
Ye[m] who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.'
6And the heavens shall declare his righteousness,
For Jehovah[n] himself is about to judge.

His charge to the faithful: ritual is unimportant

7'Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
Of thee, O Israel, would I complain:
Jehovah, thy God, am I.
8Not because of thy peace offerings will I reprove thee,
Nor for thy burnt offerings which are continually before me;[o]
9I will not take from thy house a bullock,
Nor male goats out of thy folds,
10For all the animals of the forests are mine.
There are thousands of cattle[p] upon my mountains;
11I know all the birds of the heavens,[q]
And the moving things[r] of the fields are mine.

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§ 181 Ps. 50, like 15, is from a disciple of the prophets. His ultimate purpose is to make clear the superiority of the prophetic decalogue of Ex. 20 to the merely ceremonial demands of the law. His unusually elaborate introduction in 1-4 indicates that he is well aware of the difficulties of his task, for he lived in an age which was emphasizing ever more strongly the importance of sacrifice and the ritual. Hence Jehovah himself, as in Dt. 33, is represented as coming down to earth and summoning his faithful followers to impart to them the great teaching that heart service and righteous lives and deeds are far more important than the smoke of countless whole burnt-offerings. He does not, however, condemn these popular forms of worship, but puts the social virtues of honesty and truth and personal purity in the forefront. Evidently we have here the discourse of a sage set to music. His breadth, his courage, and his tact all impress us. This ps. also illustrates the broad outlook of later Judaism, which included in its temple hymn-book a poem that attributed a secondary place to its cherished sacrificial system. The ps. probably comes from the middle or latter part of the Persian period.

[i] 50[1] The Heb. reads, *El, God, Jehovah*. But the third title, *Jehovah*, evidently belongs with the second line, where it completes the measure.

[j] 50[2] The Heb. adds *God*. But this destroys the metre of this line and was probably added by a scribe.

[k] 50[3] Heb. reads, *Let our God enter in and let him not be silent*. Possibly this line is but a pious ejaculation of a later scribe.

[l] 50[4] Slightly correcting the Heb. text in accordance with the reading of one MS. and the demands of the context.

[m] 50[5] The Gk. employs the third person rather than the first throughout this vs.

[n] 50[6] Restoring the original *Jehovah* instead of the present Heb., *God*.

[o] 50[8] *I. e.*, Jehovah brings no charge against his people of failure to render their ceremonial dues.

[p] 50[10] The familiar and poetic rendering, *The cattle on a thousand hills*, is an impossible Heb. construction, for the Heb., *on hills of a thousand*, is meaningless and impossible. A very slight change gives the above consistent rendering.

[q] 50[11] So Gk., Syr., and Targ. Heb., *mountains*.

[r] 50[11] *I. e.*, the reptiles and crawling things.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee,
For the world is mine, and all that is therein.
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls?
And drink the blood of goats?'

Voluntary offerings are acceptable

14 Offer to Jehovah[s] thanksgiving,
And pay thy vows to the Most High,
15 And call upon me in the day of trouble,
And I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me.[t]

But hypocrisy detestable

16 But to the wicked Jehovah saith,[u]
'What hast thou to do with recounting my statutes,[v]
That thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?
17 For thou, indeed, hatest instruction,
And thou hast cast my words behind thee.[w]
18 When thou sawest a thief thou wast pleased with him,[x]
And with adulterers hast thou been a partaker.
19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil,
And thy tongue frameth deceit.
20 Thou sittest to speak against thy brother,[y]
Thou slanderest the son of thine own mother!
21 These things hast thou done, while I kept silent;
Thou thoughtest that I was like thee;
I will reprove thee and set it[z] forth before thine eyes.

Conclusion

22 Consider this, ye who forget God,
Lest I tear you in pieces, with none to deliver.
23 He who offereth thanksgiving glorifieth me;
And he who walketh blamelessly[a] will I cause to see my[b] salvation.'

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[s] 50:14 Restoring the original reading. Heb., *God*.
[t] 50:15 Possibly the original read, *I will glorify thee*.
[u] 50:16 This line may have been added by a scribe, but it is required to mark a transition.
[v] 50:16 *I. e.*, for the wicked man to repeat the divine laws is but hypocrisy.
[w] 50:17 *I. e.*, rejected.
[x] 50:18 Gk., Syr., and Targ., *thou runnest with him*. Possibly this represents the original, for it is closely parallel to the following line.
[y] 50:20 The Heb. construction is awkward. Possibly the original read, *thou speakest shamefully against thy brother*.
[z] 50:21 Following the Syr. which has retained the pronoun.
[a] 50:23 The Heb. reads, *and he who puts away*. The text is evidently corrupt. A change of one consonant gives the reading adopted above, which is supported by the context. Possibly these two words are a later scribal addition, and the last line should simply read, *I will let him see the salvation of Jehovah* (Heb., *God*).
[b] 50:23 Heb., *God's*, but this is the later editor's equivalent of *Jehovah's* or, if written, as often, in abbreviated form, of the initial letter which in the Heb. is the same as the possessive *my*, which the context and metre require and which was in all probability found in the original.

IV

THE FATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

Ps. 14 (53), 32, 37, 49, 34, 52, 1, 91, 112, 73, 82, 94, 125, 128, 133

§ 182. The Destroyers of the Nation, Ps. 14

The universal degeneracy of mankind

Ps. 14 [1]Fools have said to themselves,[a] 'There is no God.'
They acted shamefully, abominably, there was no well-doer.
[2]Jehovah looked forth from heaven upon the sons of men,
To see if wise men were there seeking after God.
[3]All have gone astray, have backslidden,[b] all of them are corrupt;
There is no well-doer, no, not even one.

The resulting judgment

[4]Have the evil-doers, the devourers of my people, no knowledge?
They devour Jehovah's bread; but they do not call upon him.
[5]There they were seized with terror, for God scattered them;[c]
[6]Their wicked plan was put to shame,[d] for Jehovah rejected them.

Prayer for Israel's restoration

[7]Oh, that Israel's deliverance might come forth from Zion!
Through Jehovah's turning of the captivity of his people,
Then Jacob would exult and Israel rejoice.

§ 183. The Joy of Forgiveness and Harmony with God, Ps. 32

Joy of forgiveness and the torture of sin unconfessed

Ps. 32 [1]Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered!
[2]Happy is that man to whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity![e]

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§ 182 Ps. 53 is a duplicate of 14. Both have the title, *For the Musical Director. A Psalm of David.* Ps. 53 was inserted in the Elohistic collection so that *Elohim* or *God* has been substituted throughout for *Jehovah.* The other minor variations are simply due to scribal errors and the evident purpose in 14 is to generalize and thus adapt the original ps. to liturgical use. The Gk., Lat., and Syr. Hexapla add nine irrelevant lines, which are quoted in Rom. 3^{10-18}. They were compiled from Ps. 5^{9}, 10^{7}, 36^{1}, 140^{3}, Is. $59^{7, 8}$.

The original ps. perhaps included only $^{1-6}$. They refer not to the heathen nations, as has often been urged, but to the worst foes of the community, the atheistic, corrupt devourers of the people, who figure in many other of the pss. of the Persian period as the foes of the pious, The five-beat measure, frequently used in the lamentation song, is here effectively employed. The prayer in ^{7} is in the four-beat measure. Its connection with the preceding is not close. The sanctuary on Mount Zion has been rebuilt but there has been no general return of the Jews. If this last stanza was not an original part of the ps. it was probably added not long before the appearance of Nehemiah.

[a] 14^{1} The Heb. has in this line the sing. collective but the plural in the next line. The ones referred to are the impious, senseless rulers.

[b] 14^{3} Completing the vs. from the parallel 53^{3}, which has retained the *have backslidden* that has dropped out.

[c] 14^{5} With Briggs (*Pss.*, I, 104), following the reconstructed and consistent reading suggested by the parallel 53^{5}. Heb. reads:

There they were seized with terror, for God is with the righteous generation,
They put to shame the counsel of the afflicted, for Jehovah is his refuge.

[d] 14^{6} Heb., *Ye put to shame the counsels of the afflicted.*

§ 183 This ps. is distinctly personal. It is evidently the outgrowth of profound individual experience. At the same time it expresses universal human experience. To a noble soul the greatest source of pain is the consciousness of sin and of having wronged another. This pain, however, is an essential element in the healing process. Like the pain of a physical wound, it

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[e] 32^{2} A scribe has added, as a marginal note, *And there is no deceit in his spirit.* This line, however, lacks the regular metre of the vs. and the parallelism of thought is complete without it.

3 When I kept silent my bones grew old through my roaring all the day long;[f]
4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,
My moisture was changed to the burning heat of summer.[g]

5 My sin I made known to thee, and mine iniquity I did not cover; **God's readiness to forgive**
I said, 'I will make confession of my transgression to Jehovah;'[h]
And thou forgavest mine iniquity and pardonedst my sin.
6 For this let everyone who is pious pray to thee in a time of distress;[i]
In the rush of many waters they will not come nigh to him.

7 Thou, O my hiding place, wilt preserve me from trouble; **The divine assurance**
Thou wilt encompass me about with glad songs of deliverance [saying],
8 'I will teach thee and instruct thee in the way in which thou shouldst go;
I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee.'[j]

9 Be not as the horse, the mule, without understanding,[k] **Let all learn the lesson**
To be muzzled with bridle and halter, its harness.[l]
10 Many are the sorrows that come to the wicked;
But mercy encompasses him who trusts in Jehovah.[m]

§ 184. The Fate of the Righteous and Wicked, Ps. 37

Ps. 37 1 Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, **Envy not evil-doers**
Nor be envious of those who do wrong;
2 For as grass they shall quickly wither,
And fade away like the green herb.

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rallies all the healing forces and makes it possible for the Divine Physician to effect the cure. The practical didactic purpose of the ps. is evident. It is difficult, however, to determine its exact date. It unmistakably reflects that deeper insight which came to the Jews after the exile. It is a companion and, in a sense, the sequel of 51. Its spirit and theme are characteristic of the pss. of the middle and latter part of the Persian period. The consciousness of Jehovah's favor and the spirit of rejoicing, cf. [7] and [8], suggest that it was written after Nehemiah had done his work of restoration. It probably comes from somewhere between 400 and 331 B.C.

[f] 32[3] Here the psalmist describes in characteristic Oriental imagery his feelings before he had confessed his sin and knew by experience the happiness of him whose sins were forgiven.

[g] 32[4] The Gk. translators evidently had difficulty in translating this line. They read, *I was changed into misery as when thorns smite me;* but the Heb. gives a satisfactory rendering closely parallel to [3].

[h] 32[5] Slightly revising the Heb. text as the context and the metre demand.

[i] 32[6] Again correcting the Heb. in keeping with the context.

[j] 32[8] Cf. Pr. 16[30]. The Heb. reads, lit., *I will counsel, mine eye upon thee.* Part of the line has apparently been lost.

[k] 32[9] The metre here changes to the four-beat and the stanza may be secondary. The thought is, do not make the mistakes of brute beasts which have to be guided by a bridle and halter.

[l] 32[9] A scribe has added the ungrammatical, awkward note *not near to thee.*

[m] 32[10] Vs. [11] is evidently a later liturgical addition:

Be glad in Jehovah, and rejoice ye righteous;
And shout for joy, all ye who are upright in heart.

§ 184 This is an acrostic ps. Each four lines begin with a succeeding letter of the Heb. alphabet. Certain lines have been displaced; others compressed or enlarged. Four lines (associated with the Heb. letter *ayin*) have been lost in the Heb. but retained in the Gk. The theme of the ps. is stated in the first vs. It is the problem of evil, and the poet maintains in general the position of Job's friends. He asserts that if the wicked do not reap the consequences of their crimes their descendants will. He also looks forward to a future judgment, [13, 20]. In [25] the author asserts that he is an old man but he repudiates the position later maintained by the aged author of Ecc. It probably comes from the earlier part of the Persian period. The poet may have been a contemporary of the author of Job. In Job 14[2-6] the assertion made in [4-11] is combated, indicating that the poem of Job is slightly later.

Trust Jehovah

3 Trust in Jehovah and do good,
Dwell in the land and feed securely.
4 Take delight in Jehovah,
And he will grant thee the requests of thy heart.
5 Commit thy way[n] to Jehovah,
Trust in him and he will bring it to pass;
6 And he will bring to light thy righteousness,[o]
And thy just cause as the noon-day.

Find rest in that trust

7 Rest in Jehovah and wait patiently for him,
Do not fret thyself because of the prosperous,
Because of the man who accomplishes his evil plans[p]
14c To slay those who act uprightly.
8 Refrain from anger and forsake wrath;
Fret not thyself to do evil,[q]
9 For evil-doers[r] shall be completely cut off;
But they who hope in Jehovah shall inherit the earth.
10 Yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
Consider his place and he is gone!
11 But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And take delight in abundance of prosperity.[s]

The destruction of the wicked is sure

12 The wicked man plots against the righteous,
And gnashes his teeth against them.
13 The Lord laugheth at him,
For he seeth that his day is coming.
14 The wicked unsheath the sword,
And bend their bow for slaughter;[t]
15 Their sword shall enter their heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

Jehovah careth for the righteous

16 Better is a little that the righteous have,
Than the abundant wealth of the wicked.
17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But Jehovah upholdeth the righteous.
18 Jehovah knoweth the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.
19 They are not ashamed in the time of calamity,

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[n] 37[5] Lit., *roll upon.*

[o] 37[6] Lit., *he will cause thy righteousness to go forth as light.* But the above translation represents the English idiom. The idea is that Jehovah will fully vindicate those who put their trust in him.

[p] 37[7] A line is needed to complete the regular acrostic structure that has been observed throughout the ps. It is supplied by [14c], which is alien to its context.

[q] 37[8] It is exceedingly probable that this line is corrupt, since it repeats the thought already expressed in the preceding vs. and is itself lacking in clearness. Possibly the original read, *Fret not thyself because of the evil.*

[r] 37[9] Slightly changing the order of words in the sentence as the metrical structure of the vs. requires.

[s] 37[11] Or *peace.*

[t] 37[14] A scribe has added *poor and needy* and the line that completes [7].

And in days of hunger they are satisfied.
20 For the wicked shall surely[u] perish,
25d And their descendants shall be seeking bread,[v]
And the enemies of Jehovah shall be cut off;[w]
They shall vanish, they shall vanish away in smoke.
21 The wicked borrows and restores not,
But the righteous shows mercy and gives.
22 Those blest by him shall inherit the land,
And those cursed by him shall be cut off.[x]
23 A man's steps are ordered by Jehovah,
And he establisheth him in whose way he delighteth,[y]
24 For though he fall, he shall not go headlong,
For Jehovah upholdeth his hand.
25 I have been young and now I am old,
But I have not seen the righteous forsaken.
26 At all times he is merciful and lends,
And his seed is blessed.

27 Turn from evil, and do good, — And vindicates them
And abide in the land[z] forever;
28 For Jehovah loveth justice,
And forsaketh not his faithful ones.
The lawless[a] are destroyed forever,
And the descendants of the wicked are cut off;
29 The righteous inherit the land,
And dwell in it forever.
30 The mouth of a righteous man utters wisdom,
And his tongue speaks judgment.
31 The law of Jehovah is in his mind;
His footsteps never falter.

32 The wicked lies in wait for the righteous, — And protects them from the wicked
And seeks how he may slay him;[b]
33 But Jehovah doth not leave him in his power,[c]
Nor condemneth him as guilty when he is judged.
34 Hope in Jehovah and be faithful,[d]

---

[u] 37^{20} This vs. evidently became corrupt at an early date, so that it is almost impossible to restore its original form.

[v] 37^{25d} Transferring the last line of this vs., which is superfluous in its present context, where it was probably introduced through a scribal error instead of after the first line of [20], to where it is demanded by the context.

[w] 37^{20} The present Heb. makes no sense. Probably it would be translated, *the splendor of the meadows*, but it is more probable that the Heb. originally read as above, as the context demands.

[x] 37^{22} The Gk. reads, *those who bless him . . . those who curse him*. Possibly this rendering is the original.

[y] 37^{23} Slightly revising the Heb. text.

[z] 37^{27} Following the Gk. and adding the last word as the metre requires.

[a] 37^{28} Again following the Gk., which is supported by the context, by the metre, and the demands of the acrostic structure of the ps.

[b] 37^{32} Lit., *to slay him*.

[c] 37^{33} Lit., *forsake him in his hands*.

[d] 37^{34} Lit., *keep his way*. The text, however, is doubtful, but the general meaning is clear.

And he will exalt thee to possess the land,
On the uprooting of the wicked thou shalt look.
[35]I have seen the wicked, terror-inspiring,[e]
And putting forth his strength[f] as a green cedar;[g]
[36]Then I passed by,[h] and behold he was gone;
I sought him—he was not to be found.

The testimony of experience

[37]Watch the perfect and[i] upright man,
For the man of peace has posterity;[j]
[38]But transgressors are destroyed together,
And the posterity[j] of the wicked is cut off.
[39]The salvation of the righteous is from Jehovah,
And their refuge in the time of distress,
[40]And Jehovah helpeth and delivereth them,
He delivereth[k] them from the wicked and saveth them,
For in him they put their trust.

§ 185. Death the Great Leveller, Ps. 49

Introduction

Ps. 49 [1]Hear this, all ye peoples,
Give ear all ye inhabitants of the world,
[2]Both men of low and high degree,
Rich and poor together;
[3]My mouth shall speak wisdom,
The meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
[4]I will incline mine ear unto a parable,
I will unfold my problem[l] on the harp.

The common fate of all mankind and the futility of riches

[5]Why should I fear in evil days,
When the iniquity of my insidious foes[m] encompasses me,
[6]They who trust in their wealth,
And boast in the greatness of their riches?
[7]Surely no man can buy himself off,[n]
Can give to Jehovah his price,[o]

---

[e] 37[35] Following the Gk.
[f] 37[35] The literal meaning appears to be *and making himself bare*, that is, stripping himself for action.
[g] 37[35] Gk. and Syr. has *a cedar of Lebanon*. Possibly this is original.
[h] 37[36] So Gk., Syr., and Lat. Heb., *he passed away*.
[i] 37[37] Heb. adds, repeating the idea of the first verb, *see*.
[j] 37[37, 38] Or *a future*.
[k] 37[40] Lat. omits this verb.
§ 185 The psalmist is here struggling with the same problem as the book of Job. His logic leads him to seek retribution for the wicked and vindication for the righteous in the life beyond the grave; but he pauses on the threshold of that faith. He simply states the problem without suggesting a solution. He probably wrote during the middle or latter part of the Persian period.
[l] 49[4] Lit., *riddle, i. e.*, the enigma that is developed in the ps. that follows.
[m] 49[5] Lit., *my supplanters*. Possibly the line should be read, *when my insidious foes surround me with iniquity*.
[n] 49[7] Heb., *a brother cannot redeem a man* or *a man cannot redeem his brother*. But the above reading is supported by certain of the MSS. and it accords best with the context. The idea is that no human power can save a man from the fate which Jehovah metes out impartially to all.
[o] 49[7] Vs. [8] is the immediate sequel of [7]. The scribes, however, have inserted an obscure prose note which is apparently to be read, *for the redemption of their life is too precious, and he must leave it alone forever*.

9 That he may live on forever,
And not see the grave,[p]
10 Seeing that the wise die,
Likewise the fool and the brutish perish,
And they leave their wealth to others,
11 Their graves[q] are their homes forever,
Their places of abode for all generations—
They who have called lands by their own names!
12 Man does not abide in honor,
But is like the beasts that perish.

13 This is the fate of those who are full of confidence,
And the end of those who are pleased with their portion.[r]
14 Like a flock they are put into Sheol,
Death is their shepherd and rules over them,[s]
Soon their form wastes away,[t]
Sheol becomes their home.
15 But Jehovah will redeem my life,
From the hand of Sheol when it seizes me.[u]
16 Fear not, when one grows rich,
When the glory of his house is increased,
17 For at his death he takes nothing,
His glory cannot go down after him;
18 For if, while he lives, he blesses his life,[v]
And praises it[w] because it is well with him,
19 It will go back to the generation of his fathers,
Who behold the light nevermore.
20 Man does not abide[x] in honor,
But is like the beasts that perish.

The rich and powerful all leave behind their possessions

§ 186. Jehovah's Care for Those Who Fear and Trust Him, Ps. 34

Ps. 34 1 I will bless Jehovah at all times,
His praise is continually in my mouth.

Introduction: call to unite in praising Jehovah

[p] 49[9] Heb., *the corruption.*
[q] 49[11] Following the Gk., Syr., and Targ., and correcting two Heb. letters which have been transposed.
[r] 49[13] Interpreting the Heb. idiom as in Dt. 21[17] and II Kgs. 2[9].
[s] 49[14] The text of this vs. is almost hopelessly corrupt. A scribe has introduced the idea that the righteous shall rule over them. But this idea is inconsistent with the context, which evidently carries on the figure of the flock, with death as the shepherd, introduced into the first part of the vs.
[t] 49[14] Lit., *in the morning and their form to corruption.* The Gk., however, suggests the above reconstruction which is consistent with the context. The reading of the last line is only conjectural.
[u] 49[15] Possibly these two lines are secondary and express the pious hope of a later scribe. He apparently does not have in mind individual immortality, but simply Jehovah's continued preservation of his life.
[v] 49[18] *I. e.*, congratulates himself that he is still alive.
[w] 49[18] Heb., *thanks thee.* But the man's life seems to be the object as it is in turn the subject of the following sentence, *i. e.*, a man's life goes down into Sheol, which was conceived of as the cheerless, unlighted abode of the shades.
[x] 49[20] Correcting the text as in [12].
§ 186 This ps. has many affinities with 32. Its strong didactic purpose is evident. In imagination one sees the disciples of the ancient sage gathered about him as he teaches them this song,

2 My soul boasts of Jehovah,[y]
The afflicted hear and are glad.
3 O magnify Jehovah with me,
And let us exalt his name together.

His readiness to deliver and guard all who call upon him

4 I sought Jehovah and he answered me,
And from all my terrors he delivered me.
5 They looked to him[z] and were radiant,[a]
And their faces were not put to shame.
6 This afflicted man cried and Jehovah[b] heard him,
And delivered him from all his distresses.
7 The angel of Jehovah[c] encampeth
Round about all who fear him to deliver them.

Exhortation to fear and seek him

8 O taste and see that Jehovah is good;
Happy is the man who seeks refuge in him.
9 O fear Jehovah, ye his holy ones,[d]
For there is no lack to those who fear him.
10 The young lions are in want and suffer hunger,
But those who seek Jehovah shall lack no good thing.
11 O sons, come, hearken to me;
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.

The way of success

12 What man takes pleasure in life?
Loves long life that he may see prosperity?
13 Keep thy tongue from evil,
And thy lips from speaking falsehood;
14 Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace and pursue it.

The contrasting fate of the wicked and righteous

16 The face of Jehovah is against evil-doers,
To cut off their memory from the earth.[e]
15 The eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous,
And his ear is open to their cry
17 They cry and Jehovah heareth,
And he delivereth them out of all their distresses.

---

which embodies the essence of his moral and spiritual instruction. Cf. [8, 11]. That they may readily memorize and remember its teachings, he has put them in the acrostic form. Through a scribal error the sixth couplet has been lost. To complete the number a later editor has added a postscript in the four-beat measure. The same or another editor has also associated the ps. in the superscription with David, but it bears all the marks of its post-exilic origin and was probably written during the middle or latter part of the Persian period.

[y] 34[2] Or *I will boast in Jehovah; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.*

[z] 34[5] Following certain Gk. MSS., Syr., and Lat. Heb., *look to him.*

[a] 34[5] *I. e.*, show by the countenance that joy which comes from the assurance of Jehovah's help.

[b] 34[6] The word *Jehovah* has probably been added to make the antecedent clear. It makes the Heb. line overfull.

[c] 34[7] The characteristic Heb. designation of Jehovah's abiding presence which guarded his people in times of danger.

[d] 34[9] *I. e.*, those who were faithful to the law and Jehovah's command.

[e] 34[16] Transposing [15] and [16] as the needs of the context require. The transposition in the Heb. is due to a scribe who was not familiar with the older order of the alphabet followed, *e. g.*, in Lam. 2.

18 Jehovah is near to the broken-hearted,
And he delivereth those whose spirits are crushed.
19 Many are the misfortunes of the righteous,
But Jehovah delivereth him from them all.
20 Jehovah[f] keepeth all his bones,
Not one of them is broken.
21 Misfortune slays the wicked;
And they who hate the righteous suffer punishment.[g]

§ 187. The Fate Awaiting the Deliberate Wrong-Doer, Ps. 52

The wages of sin are death

Ps. 52 1 Why boastest thou of evil continually, O thou mighty man?[h]
2 Thou devisest ruin, thy tongue is as a sharpened razor,[i]
3 Thou lovest evil rather than good, lying rather than speaking[j] what is right;
4 Thou lovest all kinds of destructive words,[k] O thou deceitful tongue!
5 God also will pull thee down, he will snatch thee away forever,
He will pluck thee out of thy dwelling place and root thee out of the land of the living.

The lesson taught

6 Then the righteous will see and rejoice[l] and laugh at him [saying]:
7 'Behold, the mighty man, who did not make Jehovah his refuge!
But trusted in the abundance of his riches, and made his wealth[m] his strength.'

The attitude of trust

8 But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of Jehovah.[n]
I trust in the kindness of Jehovah[n] forever and ever;
9 I will give thanks to thee forever because thou hast done it.
And I will proclaim[o] that thy name is good in the presence of thy saints.

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[f] 34[20] Following certain Gk. MSS. and the demands of the context and the metre in supplying the word *Jehovah*.

[g] 34[21] The acrostic ps. is complete with this vs. A later editor or scribe has added the refrain in the four-beat measure:

Jehovah redeemeth the life of his servants,
And none of them who trust in him shall be punished.

§ 187 A later editor ascribed this ps. to David and attributed it to the period *when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul and said to him, 'David is come to the house of Ahimelech.'* Undoubtedly this editor was right in interpreting the ps. as directed originally against a powerful but unprincipled official. Vs. [8] breathes, however, the spirit of a post-exilic rather than a pre-exilic psalmist. Nehemiah's vivid portraits of the rulers within and without the Judean community during the middle part of the Persian period suggest close analogies. The ps. may even come from the latter part of the Gk. period, when high priests like Menelaus and Jason richly deserved the bitter denunciations embodied in this ps.

[h] 52[1] The address is evidently ironical. A scribe has added the disconnected phrase, *The kindness of God*, perhaps to call attention to the fact that the arrogant sinner's strength and prosperity were simply his by divine favor.

[i] 52[2] A scribe has added *doing deceit*. But this thought is later introduced in vs. [4] and at this point destroys the metrical harmony of the vs.

[j] 52[3] Following a slightly different vowel punctuation.

[k] 52[4] *I. e.*, all kinds of slanderous and misleading statements.

[l] 52[6] Following the Syr. and certain Gk. MSS. Heb., *and they feared*.

[m] 52[7] Following the Syr. and Targ. in restoring the corrupt Heb. text, which reads, *wickedness*.

[n] 52[8] Restoring *Jehovah* as at other places in the ps.

[o] 52[9] Revising the Heb., which reads, *I will wait on*.

§ 188. Prosperity of the Righteous and the Ultimate Fate of the Wicked, Ps. 1

Prosperity of the righteous

Ps. 1 [1]Happy is the man[p]
Who follows not the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stands in the way of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of scorners;
[2]But in the teaching[q] of Jehovah is his delight,
And his teaching he studies[r] day and night.
[3]He is like a tree planted by the water-courses,
Which yields its fruit in due season,
Whose leaf never withers,
And all that he does prospers.[s]

Fate of the wicked

[4]Not so[t] the wicked!
They are like the chaff driven by the wind;
Therefore the wicked shall not rise at the judgment,[u]
Nor sinners enter[v] the assembly of the righteous.
[5]For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked shall perish.

§ 189. The Security of Him Who Trusts in Jehovah, Ps. 91

Immunity from secret pitfalls

Ps. 91 [1]Thou[w] who dwellest in the secret place of the Most High,
Who abidest under the shadow of the Almighty,

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§ 188 The first ps. bears no superscription and in certain codices it is not even numbered. It was evidently given its present place by the latest editor that it might serve as an appropriate introduction to the entire Psalter. Cf. the introduction to Pr. 1^{1-6}. It reflects the point of view of the devoted student of the law and the prophets. Vs. [2] is based on Josh. 1^{8}, and [3] draws its figures from Jer. 17^{5-8} and Ezek. 47^{12}. The author also writes in the spirit and literary mould of the late wisdom school. The background is a period of peace. The foes of the pious are not outside the community, as in the Persian period, but the wicked, the scoffers, those Jews who had no love for the law or respect for the teachings of the prophets and sages. All these indications point to the latter part of the Gk. period, not long after the days of the Chronicler, but before the beginning of the Maccabean struggle. The influence of the close contact with the debasing Gk. civilization best explains the presence of the scoffers. B. Sir. 6^{37}, $14^{20, 21}$ reflect both the thought of this Ps. and a similar background. The conception of the final judgment in [4] is not as late as Dan. 12^{2}, but is parallel to that of Is. 26^{14-19}, which seems to antedate the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes that began in 168 B.C. Its date, therefore, lies probably between 250 and 200 B.C.

Barring the illustration in [3], the parallelism is remarkably close, and extends beyond the synonymous parallelism of succeeding vss. to the two regular strophes, which stand in perfectly balanced antithetic relation to each other. Vs. [3] interrupts this, and may be secondary; but the antithetic figure in [4] seems to depend upon that in [3]. The impressive four-beat measure predominates but the metre is irregular.

[p] 1^{1} Lit., *Oh the supreme happiness of.*

[q] 1^{2} Or, following a possible revision, *fear.*

[r] 1^{2} Lit., *murmurs.* The reference is to the low murmuring of Oriental students, who, like the Moslems to-day, recite their sacred law aloud that they may remember and impress its teachings upon their minds.

[s] 1^{3} This vs. is a composite: the simile in the first line is taken from Jer. 17^{8} where it is applied to the man who trusts in Jehovah. The figure of the living trees on the banks of the river of life, which bear fruit each month and whose leaf never withers, is from Ezek. 47^{12}. The last line, like [2b], was probably suggested by Josh. 1^{8}. Since this vs. departs widely from the regular metre of the rest of the ps. and its balanced rhythm of stanza, Briggs regards it as a later editorial addition (*Pss.*, I, 6).

[t] 1^{4} *Not so* is repeated in the Gk., but the parallelism with [1] does not support it.

[u] 1^{4} In this late ps. the reference is probably to the resurrection and final judgment as in Is. 26^{14-19}.

[v] 1^{4} The metre is defective; the usual verb *enter* has probably dropped out.

§ 189 The serene, stately ninety-first ps. is one of the greatest poems of the Psalter. Its prominence in the story of Jesus' temptation indicates that he was familiar with it and that its

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[w] 91^{1} The address in this line is clearly in the second person, as demanded by vs. [2]. A scribe, overlooking this fact, has changed the verbs in [1] into the third person instead of the second.

2 Who sayest[x] to Jehovah, 'Thou art my refuge,
And my fortress, my God in whom I trust,'
3 Surely he will deliver thee from the snare,
When entrapped[y] from the destructive pit.[z]
4 With his pinions he will cover thee,
And under his wings he will hide thee.

From pestilence and sweeping destruction

His faithfulness is a shield and defence,
5 Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow that flieth by day,
6 Of the pestilence that walketh in darkness,
Of the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.
7 Though a thousand fall at thy side,
Yea, ten thousand at thy right hand,
It shall not come nigh thee.

From sudden calamity

8 Thou needest but to look with thine eyes,
And behold the reward of the wicked.[a]
9 Since thou sayest,[b] 'Jehovah is thy refuge,'
And thou hast made the Most High thine abode,
10 There shall no evil befall thee,
No calamity shall come nigh thy tent;
11 For he will give thee in charge of his angels,
To keep thee in all thy ways;
12 Upon their palms they will bear thee up,
Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.
13 Thou wilt tread upon the lion[c] and adder,
Thou wilt trample the young lion and dragon.

God's promise and covenant

14 Inasmuch as he loveth me I will deliver him,[d]
I will exalt him, for he knoweth my name,

---

heroic optimism was a great source of comfort to him even though it could not be made a cloak to cover sensational and unjustifiable methods. In the current English translation, based on the Heb., there is a confusion in the opening vss. between the second and third persons. It is exceedingly probable, however, that the original was in the form of a direct address. The didactic purpose of the ps. is clearly evident. It may have been originally addressed by some venerable sage to his disciple, when the youth's preliminary moral and religious training had been completed and he was just about to enter upon his membership in the congregation of those who worshipped at Jehovah's temple. It is based on the lifelong experience of the sage. It recalls the charge of an ancient warrior-king as he conferred knighthood upon a youthful follower. It was well calculated to inspire confidence and courage in the presence of countless perils. It remains as one of the priceless heritages from Israel's heroic past. The serene atmosphere and the prominent wisdom note indicate that this ps. probably comes from the Gk. period.

[x] 91[2] Following the Lat. and Syr. Heb., *I will say*.

[y] 91[3] It is probably best, with Briggs, to read this as a passive participle rather than as a noun (commonly translated *fowler*). This reading is strongly supported by the metre.

[z] 91[3] Slightly correcting the Heb., which reads *pestilence;* but cf. [6], where deliverance from pestilence is described. The figure throughout [3, 4] is that of a hunted bird.

[a] 91[8] This vs. is loosely connected with the context and strikes the one negative, dissonant note in this peerless ps. It may be a later addition.

[b] 91[9] The Heb. word *thou* probably represents a scribal corruption for the similar word *thou sayest*, in which case the line is in perfect keeping with the parallelism and with [2].

[c] 91[13] Gk., *asp*, which reading is obtained by a change of but one letter in the Heb., and this may represent the original although the parallelism with the following line is more perfect in the standard Heb. text.

[d] 91[14] This paragraph represents the word of Jehovah.

[15]He will call upon me and I will answer him,
In time of trouble I will be with him,
I will deliver him and bring him honor,
[16]With length of days will I satisfy him.
And show him[e] my salvation.

§ 190. Prosperity of Him Who Fears Jehovah, Ps. 112

His present prosperity

Ps. 112 [1]Happy is the man who fears Jehovah,
Who delights greatly in his commands.
[2]His offspring shall be mighty in the land,
The generation of the upright shall be blessed.
[3]Wealth and riches are in his house,
And his righteousness endures forever.
[4]Light shines[f] for the upright,
Gracious and compassionate is the righteous.
[5]It is well with the gracious and the benevolent,
Who maintains his affairs with equity.

His abiding honor

[6]For that one shall never be moved,
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance;
[7]Of tidings of evil he has no fear,
His mind is fixed[g] in Jehovah.
[8]His mind is established, he is not afraid,
Until he beholds the end of his foes.[h]
[9]He disperses, he gives to the poor,
His righteousness stands firm forever,
His horn will be exalted in honor.
[10]The wicked man will see it and be vexed,
He will gnash his teeth and melt away;
The desire[i] of the wicked will perish.

§ 191. The Consolation of the Innocent, Ps. 73

The prosperity and insolence of the wicked

Ps. 73 [1]Verily God is good to Israel,
To those who are pure in heart.

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[e] 91[16] Possibly the original read, *I will satiate him*, as found in Ps. 50[23]. The Heb. word might easily be mistaken for the one found in the standard text.

§ 190 This acrostic ps. is closely related to the acrostic 111: the one deals with the character of Jehovah and the other with that of his faithful servants. Both probably come from the same author and from a contemporary of Ben Sira. He therefore lived during the latter part of the Gk. period. It has been suggested with great plausibility that Simon the Just, the powerful high priest and friend of Ben Sira, was in the mind of the psalmist when he painted the portrait of a God-fearing man.

[f] 112[4] A scribe has added, destroying the regular measure of the ps., *in darkness*.

[g] 112[7] Apparently, through a corruption of the Heb., *trust in* has been added. It is not required by the context nor supported by the measure.

[h] 112[8] Lit., *beholds his foes*.

[i] 112[10] Or *hope*.

§ 191 This ps. deals with the problem ever before the mind of the Jewish race in the days following the destruction of Jerusalem. In the conclusions which it presents it has many analogies with the book of Job, although it does not depart absolutely from the solutions offered by Job's friends. The consciousness of God's nearness is, however, the psalmist's chief consolation.

2 My feet[j] were almost gone from under me,
My steps had well nigh slipped,
3 For I was filled with envy at the boasters,
When I beheld the prosperity of the wicked.
4 For they have no pains to endure,[k]
Sound and unimpaired is their strength;
5 In the trouble of men they have no share,
Neither are they stricken as other men.
6 Hence pride is for them as a necklace,
A garment of violence clothes them.
7 Their iniquity[l] comes forth from their fatness;[m]
Plans of the mind overflow.
8 They scoff and speak of evil,
They haughtily plot[n] oppression.
9 They direct their speech[o] against heaven,
While their tongue goes about in the earth;[p]
11 And they say, 'How doth God know?
And how can there be knowledge with the Most High?'
12 Behold, such as these are the wicked,
In continual ease they increase their wealth.

The resulting perplexity of the faithful

13 Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure,
And washed my palms in innocency,
14 And been smitten all day long,
And endured chastening each morning.
15 Had I said, 'Thus[q] will I speak,'
I had been unfaithful to the generation of thy children.
16 But when I pondered that I might understand this,[r]
The more troublesome did it seem in mine eyes;
17 Until I penetrated the sacred things[s] of God,
And came to understand their outcome.
18 Surely thou settest them[t] on slippery ground;
Thou hurlest them down into ruin.
19 How in a moment are they turned to destruction!
They are gone, they are consumed by terrors!
20 As a dream after awakening, O Lord!

Like the author of Job the poet looked expectantly beyond the portals of death for the ultimate solution of his vexed problem. The ps. probably comes from the Gk. period and is an important forerunner of the belief in individual immortality that is for the first time definitely asserted in Dan. 12.

[j] 73:2 A scribe has prefixed *and as for me*.

[k] 73:4 Dividing the Heb. letters as the metre and thought demand.

[l] 73:7 So Gk. and Syr. and the revised Heb. text.

[m] 73:7 *I. e.*, he goes on sinning yet enjoys that prosperity which is frequently, in Heb. literature, symbolised by fatness.

[n] 73:8 Lit., *keep speaking*.

[o] 73:9 Lit., *their mouth*.

[p] 73:9 Vs. 11 is the immediate sequel of 9. A scribe has inserted the note, *therefore we bring back the people thither, and the waters of fullness will be drained out to them.*

[q] 73:15 The reference is clearly to the cry of despair in 13.

[r] 73:16 *I. e.*, the prosperity of the wicked.

[s] 73:17 Or *mysteries*.

[t] 73:18 *I. e.*, the wicked.

At the awakening their phantom is despised![u]
[21] Verily my mind was embittered,
And I felt a stab in my heart,[v]
[22] And I was dull of brain, and without knowledge.
Like a stupid beast[w] was I before thee.

Jehovah their sole reliance

[23] Yet I am continually with thee;
Thou holdest fast my right hand,
[24] Thou leadest me according to thy counsel,
And takest me by the hand after thee.[x]
[25] Whom have I in heaven?
On earth I have no delight beside thee.
[26] My flesh and my heart pine,
O my Rock and my portion forever![y]
[27] For lo, they who depart from thee perish;
Thou destroyeth all who break faith with thee.[z]
[28] But[a] my happiness is to be nigh to God;
In the Lord[b] do I put my trust,
That I may recount all thy wonderful works.[c]

§ 192. God's Attitude toward Injustice Even in Heaven, Ps. 82

God's condemnation of injustice

Ps. 82 [1] God[d] standeth in the divine assembly;
In the midst of the gods he judgeth:
[2] How long will ye judge unjustly,
And respect the persons[e] of the wicked?

Command to deliver the afflicted

[3] Judge the weak and fatherless,
Do justice to the afflicted and destitute,
[4] Rescue the weak and needy,
Deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

---

[u] 73[20] Heb., *thou despisest.*
[v] 73[21] Lit., *my reins.*
[w] 73[22] Heb., *beasts.*
[x] 73[24] Heb., *and after glory*, but a different division of the Heb. letters and a change of one letter gives the above harmonious reading.
[y] 73[26] This line has been expanded by the addition of *my heart* and *God*.
[z] 73[27] Lit., *all who go a whoring from thee.*
[a] 73[28] As in [2], a scribe has prefixed *and as for me*, which is not supported by the metre.
[b] 73[28] So Gk., Syr., and certain Heb. MSS. In trad. Heb. a scribe has added *Jehovah*.
[c] 73[28] So Syr. If not original it at least interprets the Heb., which reads *works*.

§ 192 In this ps. we enter into the problems and atmosphere of Enoch and of Dan. 10–12. In the light of the ideas peculiar to those apocryphal books the difficulties of this ps. are explained. From the statement in [7] that the gods addressed in [2-4] shall die like men, it is clear that they are not human rulers. Rather, as in Dan. 10–12, they are the patron angels of the nations. In Enoch 91[15] a similar prediction is found: *On the tenth week there shall be the great eternal judgment in which he will execute vengeance amongst the angels.* Also in Enoch 10[14] their destruction is foretold. In the thought of later Judaism the fortunes and conditions of each nation were attributed to the action of its patron angel. These patron angels corresponded to the heathen gods worshipped by the different races. Dan. 4[25] and 10[20, 21] teach that these gods were to be destroyed and that Jehovah was to rule absolutely and eternally. These ideas are peculiar to the latter part of the Gk. or the earlier part of the Maccabean period. Here this ps. finds its natural historical setting. The date, 204 B.C., urged by Hitzig, when Antiochus the Great was about to invade Palestine, is possible. It probably antedates the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes.

[d] 82[1] Probably originally *Jehovah*.
[e] 82[2] *I. e.*, show favoritism to. Cf. Ex. 23[2, 3, 6-8], Dt. 1[17], Mal. 2[9].

5They[f] know not, neither do they understand,
They walk about in darkness;
The very foundations of the earth are shaken. *Effects of their injustice*

6I said, 'Ye are gods,
And all of you sons of the Most High;
7Nevertheless ye shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes.' *Their coming fate*

8Arise, O God, judge the earth;
For thou shalt inherit all the nations. *Appeal to God to arise*

§ 193. Petition That Jehovah Will Avenge His People, Ps. 94

Ps. 94 1O Jehovah, thou God of vengeance!
Thou God of vengeance, shine forth!
2O Judge of the earth arise,
Render the proud a recompense.
3O Jehovah, how long shall the wicked,
How long shall the wicked exult?
4They pour forth, they speak arrogantly,
They speak boastfully, all the workers of iniquity.
5They crush thy people, O Jehovah,
And thine inheritance they sorely[g] afflict.
6The widow and alien they slay,
And the fatherless they pitilessly[g] murder.
7They say, 'Jehovah will not see,
And the God of Jacob will not give heed.'
8Ye brutish among the people, consider;
Ye fools, when will ye get understanding?
9He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear?
Or he who formeth the eye, shall he not see?
10He who disciplineth the nations, shall he not reprove?
He who teacheth mankind, doth he not know?[h]
11Jehovah knoweth men's thoughts,
That they are but vanity. *The wrong against Jehovah's people*

12Happy is the man whom thou disciplinest
Whom thou teachest out of thy law, O Jehovah, *His care for his people*

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[f] 82[5] The antecedent here is not clear. The heathen gods and the nations which they represent are apparently in the psalmist's mind.

§ 193 This ps. probably comes from the latter part of the Gk. period and is directed not against the foreign foes but against the corrupt and unprincipled Jewish rulers who, like the high priests at the beginning of the Maccabean struggle, allied themselves with the foes of their nation and did not hesitate to punish those who were faithful to the law. Cf. [21]. It clearly expresses the perplexities and beliefs of the forerunners of the Hasideans and Pharisees who later showed their loyalty to Jehovah's law by facing death for its sake.

[g] 94[5, 6] Supplying the adverbial idea implied by the verb and required to carry out the measure of the line.

[h] 94[10] Lit., *knowledge*.

[13]To keep calm in the days of misfortune,
Till the pit has been dug for the wicked.
[14]For Jehovah will not forsake his people,
Neither will he abandon his heritage,
[15]Until righteousness[i] returneth to judgment,
And following it[j] all the upright in purpose.

The confidence which that care inspires

[16]Who riseth up for my sake against the wicked?
Who standeth by my side against evil-doers?
[17]If it had not been that Jehovah had been my help,
I had soon dwelt in the land of silence.
[18]When I thought my foot was slipping,
Thy lovingkindness, O Jehovah, was upholding me.
[19]When cares were multiplied within me,
Thy comforts were delighting my soul.
[20]Art thou allied with[k] the throne of wickedness,
Which frameth mischief by statute?
[21]They lie in wait for the life of the righteous,
And condemn to death the innocent.[l]
[22]But Jehovah is my defence,
And my God is the Rock of my refuge.
[23]Upon them he hath recompensed[m] their iniquity,
And by their wickedness Jehovah will exterminate them.

§ 194. The Established Position of the Righteous, Ps. 125

Jehovah's protecting care

Ps. 125 [1]They who trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved.
Forever [2]Jerusalem sits enthroned, with mountains round about her;
So Jehovah is round about his people, from henceforth and forevermore.
[3]For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest[n] upon the lot of the righteous,
To the end that the righteous may not reach out their hands to iniquity.

Prayer for justice

Do good, O Jehovah, to the good and to the upright in heart;
[5]But those who turn aside to their crooked ways—may Jehovah drive them away.[o]

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[i]94[15] Probably Briggs is right in concluding that righteousness here is personified even as we to-day personify justice.

[j]94[15] Lit., *after it.* This is the common Heb. idiom equivalent to follow.

[k]94[20] Lit., *have fellowship with thee.*

[l]94[21] Lit., *and they condemn innocent blood.*

[m]94[23] So certain Heb. MSS. and Gk. Trad. Heb. text repeats verb through dittography and adds *our God.*

§ 194 The reference in [3] to the sceptre of wickedness, which may lead the righteous to reach out their hands to iniquity, is a vivid description of the policy of Antiochus Epiphanes. The antithesis also in [4, 5] between the righteous and the perverse is a clear reflection of conditions in the Jewish state at the beginning of the Maccabean struggle.

[n]125[3] Possibly the Gk. is right in reading, *for he [Jehovah] will not suffer to rest.*

[o]125[5] A scribe has expanded this last line by adding *evil-doers; peace upon Israel.*

§ 195. The Fortunate Lot of the Righteous, Ps. 128

Ps. 128 [1]Happy is everyone who fears Jehovah, walking in his way. **The fruits of his labor**
[2]The toil of thy hands thou eatest,[p] happy art thou and prosperous.

[3]Like a vine that is fruitful is thy wife, in the inner room of thy house; **His domestic bliss**
Thy sons are as sprigs of olive, round about thy table.
[4]Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears Jehovah.

[5]Jehovah will bless thee from Zion[q] all the days of thy life. **The divine benediction**
[6]And thou shalt look upon thy children's children, and the prosperity of Jerusalem.[r]

§ 196. The Beauty of Brotherly Love, Ps. 133

Ps. 133 [1]Behold how good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together!
[2]It is like the precious oil upon the head which runs down upon the beard,
Even on Aaron's[s] beard, running down upon the collar of his garment.
[3]Like the dew of Hermon, that descends upon the mountains of Zion;
For there[t] Jehovah hath commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.

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§ 195 This ps. is closely related in theme and spirit to 127. Both reflect the type of wisdom thought and the relative prosperity of the Gk. period.

[p] 128[2] So Gk.

[q] 128[5] A scribe has transferred three words which belong to [6] and inserted them in [5]. Restored to their logical and metrical position, they give us two well-balanced lines.

[r] 128[6] A later editor has added here, as at the end of 125, *Peace be to Israel.*

§ 196 The unity which the poet has in mind, if the present text be original, is not merely that of a family but of the Jewish race assembled for public worship. The sense of racial and religious unity spreads and delights one even as the incense of the descending oil or the refreshing dews from Hermon. The ps. probably comes from the Gk. period.

[s] 133[2] *I. e.*, of the high priest.

[t] 133[3] *I. e.*, in Jerusalem.

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Logically and Chronologically Arranged and Translated

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